THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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FLORABELLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY ELLA WHEELER.

Did you see Florabelle? has she passed you this morning?
A tall, slender maiden, with hair like spun gold!
She has? then I pray you, sir, heed my warning.
It is just the old oft-rehearsed story was told.

Florabelle is a jilt, a coquette, a deceiver,
She angles for hearts, with soft words and sweet smiles,
Forewarned is forearmed. Don't you trust nor believe her;
Be deaf to her cooing, be blind to her wiles.

She has eyes like the heart of a blue morning glory,
She has lips like a rosebud just sprinkled with dew,
'Tis the old hackneyed tale: 'tis the same wretched story,
A woman all fair, yet all false and untrue.

With her soft silken hair in its meshes and tangles,
With her pink and white cheeks, and her full ruby lips,
With her eyes shining clear like the heaven's bright spangles,
She has wrecked as strong hearts as the ocean has ships.

Those blue eyes are ever on watch for a stranger,
She thirsts for fresh conquests, and she has marked you;
I warn you, my friend, that your peace is in danger,
Take heed lest the day that you met her you rue.

Don't bask in her smiles for one moment, but leave her
Before you're entangled and find it too late;
Florabelle is a jilt, a coquette, a deceiver,
I have given you warning, now choose your own fate.

THE SWAMP OUTLAWS;

OR,

A SECRET OF TWENTY YEARS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

CHAPTER X.

A CAPTURE.

The two from whom Solomon had become separated, had moved on slowly into the swamp, occasionally shooting some small game—forced in most cases to follow a single, narrow path, though in some localities finding spots free from undergrowth, and of firmer surface. On one of these spots, of larger extent than usual, they became considerably separated, being attracted in opposite direction by indications of game. Howard's route led him to the entrance of a narrow path, which had evidently been lately trodden by some large animal, though the peculiar character of the surface prevented the impressions being sufficiently marked for his skill in woodcraft to enable him to declare what creature had made them.

Calling to Du Bar to follow, he plunged excitedly into the path, thoughtless of danger, animated solely by the instinct of pursuit.

The track wound in many intricate bends, through a dense thicket of vegetation, tropical in its luxuriance. The air was moist, hot, and oppressively close, so that after ten minutes traversing of the path, as rapidly as its yielding surface would permit, he was forced to pause and proceed more slowly, gasping for breath from his exertions in so oppressive an atmosphere.

After a few moments more he emerged from the narrow path into a more open and dryer space.

Here he stopped to regain breath. As he stood thus, surrounded by a dense wall of vegetation, which was utterly destitute of any indication of life or motion, and awful in its noontide stillness, a sudden sense of isolation, that was almost terror, came upon him. It semed to his excited imagination as if he was in the heart of a Carboniferous forest, the sole breathing creature in a world of vegetation. The sense of helplessness, of utter isolation from the whole human race, grew rapidly more overpowing, till in one of those unreasoning panics to which all men are at times liable, he dropped his weapon, and was on the point of rushing in a paroxysm of terror from the scene.

At this instant the breaking of a dry branch struck sharply upon his excited senses. He turned hastily towards the sound, in time to catch a glimpse of a man with levelled rifle. Simultaneous with the flash was the sensation of a terrible blow upon his head, and he fell prostrate and insensible, half buried in the thick grass.

As Solomon broke upon the scene of the attempted assassination, and startled the outlaw fom his prey, he wondered, occupied as his mind was with his fallen friend, at the rush he had just heard through the bushes, as of some one escaping in terror from the scene of murder. With the thought came the apparent solution, that it was Du Bar, who, in cowardly fright, had deserted his friend at the moment of danger.

He hastily made the round of the narrow space, peering keenly through the bushes, but no person was visible in the short distance to which sight could penetrate.

"Watch 'em Flash," he said to the dog, who had stationed himself in an attitude of attention at the entrance of a path near that by which Howard had come.

The animal pricked up his ears, emitted a low bark, ran hastily round and round the open space, penetrating every opening that appeared, and finally returned to his selected station, where he seated himself with the dignity of an appointed sentinel.

Turning now to his injured friend, Solomon in utter surprise beheld him raised on one arm, and rubbing his head in an uncertain, bewildered manner, as of one dizzy from the effects of a blow.

In fact, his quick movement in turning, and a slight stoop he had made at the same time, had saved his life. The bullet had simply grazed his skull, scoring his head in its passage, and temporarily affecting his brain by the sharp concussion, but doing no serious injury. Solomon helped him to his feet, bathed the injured place with cool water from a small spring that bubbled near them, and after a few moments Howard had almost entirely recovered; only a slight giddiness and the trifling pain of the wound remaining in evidence of the danger he had passed.

"Are you fit to walk now?" Solomon anxiously inquired. "It's risky ground we're on, or I'd sartainly not hurry you."

"As sound as ever," replied Howard. "This dizziness will soon pass off, and does not affect me seriously now."

"Here is your gun then, mebbe you'll want it. And, by—, the hound's dropt his rifle. A good piece too," he continued, closely examining it. "I skeered him, sure enough. We've got all we want to carry without it, but I don't want to leave our spoils for the enemy, so I'll just hide it in the bush somewhere out of sight." Proceeding a few steps down the narrow path by which Howard had come, he hid the weapon in the hollow of an ancient cypress that stood beside the path.

"Now how to get back to our boat. I expect Du Bar 'll be there ahead of us, for I heered him runnin' like mad. I hope the blasted coward will not run off with the skiff."

"I came by that path," said Howard, pointing.

"What kind of a track was it?'

"Very narrow and crooked."

"This 'un looks to run the same way, and looks wider and straighter. Besides that the dog's picked it out, so I think we'd better try it, a distance anyhow."

"Very well, I trust to your experience."

"Experience! I haven't a mite of it. Nor judgment neither. But the dog's got dog sense, an' that's better than man sense jest now."

The path they had entered was wider than the other and seemed well trodden, the bottom being comparatively dry. Five minutes' rapid walking brought them into a wide open space, which Howard immediately recognized as the spot on which he had parted from Du Bar.

From this point he had a pretty clear conception of the route by which they had come, and they trod steadily on with better assurance of their direction.

At length, by certain landmarks which he recognized, Howard knew that they were near the spot at which their first game had been brought down, and where Solomon had parted from the company.

A low whine from the dog arrested their steps at this point. The animal, a short distance in advance, stood motionless as a statue, his eyes fixed on some object ahead, his teeth angrily displayed.

"Quiet, Flash, watch 'em, boy, watch 'em," said Solomon, in a low voice. "He sees game, Mr. Howard, an' its not coon nor turkey this time. Wait till I've a squint ahead."

Carefully advancing, he looked over the dog's shoulder. A single glance sufficed. Standing beside a tree on the edge of the clearing next them, stood the man whom Solomon had lately seen, knife in hand, bending over the prostrate body of his friend.

"There's game," he whispered, "that's better than bear. Shall we take him?"

"If we can," answered Howard in the same tone.

"Be ready to cover him with your weapon at the right minute," whispered Solomon. "But yours is a shot-gun. Take my rifle. An' if you've got to fire, don't miss. The fellow did his prettiest to finish you."

Stooping so as to keep under cover of the bushes till the last moment, he cautiously advanced, planting his steps with the utmost care, the spongy, springing soil drowning every sound, so that his advance was utterly noiseless.

Reaching the edge of the bushes he peered carefully out. The outlaw still stood with his back toward them, unaware of their approach. His eyes were fixed on some object on the ground that seemed closely to arrest his attention.

The tree, a huge-trunked oak, stood almost in a right line between the two, and by a slight movement to the left Solomon brought it directly between, so that he was enabled to advance under cover of its trunk.

A dozen noiseless steps placed him in this post of vantage. Gazing round the great trunk with the utmost caution, he saw the outlaw, almost within reach of his hand, with his eyes still fixed on the ground before him.

Solomon braced his muscles for the leap, and was just on the point of springing on his foe, when the latter with a hasty step forward struck viciously with his heel at some object hidden in the grass from the vision of his keen observer.

"Thar's one rattler gone under, for sure," said the outlaw, with a hoarse, loud laugh.

The sudden movement and his voice excited the dog, so that, fiercely barking, it rushed forward. The outlaw turned and, with a violent kick, met the attempted spring of the animal, and sent it howling several feet from him.

At the same instant he caught a glimpse of Howard, standing at the entrance of the path, the rifle at his shoulder, and his eye ranging along the sights, covering him truly.

He crouched back involuntarily, with a shrinking, trembling movement, as of one who sees a ghost, evidently affected with the momentary notion that this was the spirit of his victim.

"Move one step, and you are a dead man!" cried Howard.

At the same instant, with the leap of a panther, Solomon sprang from his concealment, and grasping the man in his sinewy arms, bore him furiously to the ground.

The attack was so sudden that he had no time for resistance, and though he struggled violently the next moment, he was held at such a disadvantage that his efforts were all in vain.

"Put a bullet through his head if he don't give in," cried Solomon. "Let me have the bit of twine in your coat pocket."

Mr. Howard threw him a piece of strong cord, with which he proceeded firmly to bind his prisoner's arms, the latter ceasing to struggle now that he saw the muzzle of the rifle within a foot of his head.

But what he lacked in movement he made up in speech, cursing with a virulence, and a wonderful command of the vocabulary of expletives, that almost made the listeners' hair stand on end.

"Shut your foul mouth, or as I'm a livin' man I'll set the dog on you!" said Solomon, tightening the cords as he spoke, and forcing the outlaw to rise on his feet.

"Wall, yer got me fast, durn ye!" said the prisoner. "But yer can't make me jog a step. An' yer in a hornet's nest yersels, mind ye. See that dead rattler!" Spurning the crushed rattlesnake with his foot. "Ye'll be wus nor that afore ye get outer this. An' Jim Budd's not the man ter brag."

"We'll see if there aint some inducement for Jim Budd to move," said Solomon coolly, cutting an elastic sapling as he spoke, and fashioning it into a switch. "Now, my man, if you lag a step you'll get this across your head an' shoulders, and mind you it'll not be play if I try it on. Now git."

The outlaw glanced sullenly at the uplifted rod and at the determined face of the man who bore it, and after a moment's hesitation stepped forward.

A PERILOUS PASSAGE THROUGH THE SWAMP.

Solomon followed, holding an end of the cord that bound his arms.

"Keep your eye on the sights, Mr. Howard," he said. "An' if he makes a jump for it, shoot him down as you would a dog."

"I knows yer, Sol Muddle," said the man, viciously. "It'll be my turn next."

"As soon as you please. But I'll land you in jail fust, an if they don't hang you it's a caution."

They continued thus for about a mile, the outlaw glancing uneasily from side to side, as if hoping for succor. At one point he put his hand to his mouth and emitted a shrill whistle, but it was cut short by his watchful keeper, who struck him a fierce blow in the mouth that suddenly brought his signal to an end.

"Try that on again, you infernal hound, an' I'll leave them your dead carcass. If you think to fool your time with Sol Muddle I'll shoot you as quick as I'd shoot a snake." And his resolute tone plainly told the outlaw that any further resistance would be dangerous.

In a short time after, they emerged upon the small open space at which they had left their boat.

Sitting here upon the trunk of a fallen tree they beheld Du Bar apparently waiting for them.

He started and gazed at the approaching party with utter astonishment, his wondering looks alternating between Howard and the prisoner, as if at a loss to account for the appearance of either.

"What does this mean?" he at length ejaculated.

"It means that we have found larger and wilder game than we expected," said Howard, "a species of wild beast that infests this swamp, but is not often captured."

"You're right there," said Solomon, "neither coon nor bear this time. But a Budd is a wilder beast than any bear of them all."

A glance of recognition passed, unseen by the others, between Du Bar and the prisoner.

Drawing out the boat from its concealment, Solomon made his prisoner enter it. He forced him to sit on the bottom of the boat near the stern, and tied the free end of the cord to the bottom in such a way that he could not possibly escape.

"Now, lads, we've got to lay down to it," said Solomon, taking one pair of oars, and directing Du Bar to take the other, while Howard sat in the bow, with his weapon ready, and glancing keenly ahead, both to guard against danger and to direct the rowers.

The latter bent vigorously to their oars, and made the boat spin with their efforts. In a moment they had entered the wide pond already mentioned, and darting across it, and down the narrow channel leading to it, emerged in the main bed of the creek.

CHAPTER II.

THE ESCAPE.

"Now, gents, we've got to make a break for it," said Solomon. "It's dangerous quarters we're in, an' I've my notion that mebbe this feller's whistle has waked the hornets. Lay heavy on your oars, sir; and you, Mr. Howard, keep both eyes open. We're not out of the swamp yet, that we was fools ever to come in."

"I don't apprehend any danger," said Du Bar. "It is no great distance from here to the dry land, and we will soon shoot over it."

"Mebbe you don't," replied Solomon, coolly. "There wasn't a mite of danger in the whole swamp, 'cording to you; yet I rather think we found some. You got us here, now let's see what you can do towards getting us out."

"Faith, I am no more anxious to meet any of this fellow's confederates than yourself; and if you think there is real danger—"

"I sartainly do, so let's to the oars."

The boat during this conversation had been allowed to drift with the force of the impetus already given to it. They now applied themselves again to the oars and drove the skiff swiftly down the stream.

After five minutes' rowing through a bordering thicket of unusual density, they were startled by a long, low, quavering whistle that broke upon the air, seemingly from a considerable distance to the left. Like an echo, sounded a shrill reply to it from their very feet.

"A signal, by all that's stupid!" cried Solomon, leaping to his feet. "An' I've been fool enough to let this dog go unmuzzled."

The outlaw laughed, a coarse, sneering laugh, that was suddenly checked by a huge bunch of rope, which his captor thrust into his mouth as a gag.

"It's a chance now if we don't have a brush. I reckon the wretches will be ambushed for us. Mr. Du Bar, you'll have to strain your wrists for the next ten minutes, as I doubt but it'll be a close shave."

The boat now shot forward with redoubled speed under their vigorous use of the oars. They were both good oarsmen, and rowed with their utmost skill and strength. Howard stood upright in the bow, his rifle ready for instant use, and straining his eyes vigilantly ahead.

Thus for some ten minutes they proceeded, and had made good progress towards their point of emergence from the thicket, when their hitherto silent sentinel signalled for them to stop rowing.

"Stop her headway," he said, peering forward anxiously for a full minute without another word.

"There is something wrong at the point ahead of us; there where the creek bends; but I can't quite make it out. I am sure I saw a man's head for a moment outside the screen of bushes, but it instantly disappeared."

"Drop a bullet in the spot," said Solomon. "P'raps that'll mebbe stir them out of their holes."

The words were scarce out of his lips before Howard had levelled his rifle and fired. Instantly a man leaped into full view on the point in question; then as suddenly disappeared.

"You scotched him then, for sure," laughed Solomon. "The fellow was hit, but I reckon not hard. But, lads, this is a ticklish game we're playin'. They've a reg'lar ambush there, and 'll sweep us if we try to pass it."

"We had better take to the swamp," said Howard. "They will have us entirely at their mercy if we attempt to row past."

"Mercy! They don't know sich a word. But the case is jist this. Here we've been hunting all day, and caught one fine bird, without feathers, alive. Now it's agin the grain with me to let him off. Isn't there no way to fetch him in?"

"Not that I can see," said Du Bar. "We can't pass that point in the boat, that is settled. If we took him ashore they would have too much advantage of us with such a burden on our hands."

"And if we let him go he will be one more added to the number of our foes, and a villainous one, judging from what we know of him."

"Yet what are we to do? We can't shoot him or throw him overboard. He is going to prove a white elephant on our hands."

"I'm goin' to make a stroke for it, anyhow," said Solomon. "Look here, the current is running down pretty strong jest now. Now if we set the boat adrift, I think it'll keep the middle. Our game'll be to trudge down jest back of the bushes on the bank, and keep an eye on the boat. They are thinner back there, and we can easy make our way."

"But how are we to pass the outlaws?"

"Jest by takin' t'other side of the creek. They won't try to cross in our face, and if they think to swim out to the boat jest let them try it on. If things work right we can bring in our prisoner yet."

"An excellent plan," said Howard, "if there should not prove too many obstacles in the way. At all events, it is the best thing offering, and we will try it. Back her a little, here is a good landing place."

As the boat commenced to move slowly backward, the ambushed foe gave a shout of derision, and displayed themselves to the number of four men on the point.

The boat slid into a small cove, out of sight from their position, and they instantly disappeared as if to make their way back behind the bordering screen.

Hastily tying his prisoner's ankles, so as to render him utterly helpless, Solomon followed the others ashore, and gave the boat a push that sent it to the centre of the current, where it began to drift slowly downward.

They at once penetrated the bushes, so as to be out of sight from the opposite shore, having to make vigorous use of their knives in doing so. They found the ground here somewhat dryer than usual, it being drained by the watercourse. The underbrush was still thick, but low, and they found no difficulty in keeping pace with the boat in their onward progress, the dog taking the lead. The movement was very slow, and for several minutes they trudged onwards, without hearing or seeing anything of the enemy, who, as they conjectured, was seeking to divine the meaning of this new departure before declaring himself.

Suddenly the outlaws seemed to have discovered the object in the bottom of the boat, and signalled their discovery by a loud yell of anger. The boat was at this instant rounding the point on which the ambush had been made, and, as it moved close to the shore, one of the outlaws, a full-blooded negro, leaped into the water and reached forward to grasp it as it approached. A bullet from the rifle of the watchful Solomon whistled by in close proximity to his ear, and he flung himself back into the grove with a ludicrous haste, the boat quickly swinging out again into deep water. For ten minutes more the slow progress continued without a visible movement on the part of the outlaws. They were now within a mile of the open country, and the boat slowly but steadily drifting onward, in the very centre of the stream. It passed at length under the branches of a huge oak that far overhung the creek. As it did so something was seen to fall from an overhanging branch, striking in the stern of the boat, very near the position in which they had left the bound man.

Their eyes were instantly directed upon the limb, but nothing was visible, though Flash set up a furious barking, as if scenting game. It was a massive branch, sufficiently so to hide the form of a man, being screened also with thick leaves. No movement was visible in any part of the tree, and they were turning away when they saw a man leap into the bushes on the other side of the trunk. He had descended the tree so skillfully as to entirely elude their scrutiny.

"What can it mean?" said Howard. "There is some scheme hidden behind this, but I can't understand it."

"It means, in my notion,' replied Solomon, "that they've dropped him a knife. But it's little good it 'll do him, except it drops mighty near his hands, an' that's a slim chance."

"Not one in a million," said Du Bar.

"But the millionth may win," replied Howard. "We will have to keep a sharp eye upon the boat, and if we see any movement remind him of our disapproval by a shot."

From the moment of this incident the foe entirely disappeared from the other side of the water. Solomon kept a vigilant watch upon the bushes, occasionally ascending the bank and searching the opposite shore with all his powers of vision; but in vain, no trace of a human being could be seen.

"I dread but they've left the shore," he said, after one of these efforts.

"So much the better," said Du Bar. "They have given it up as a useless task, and we can make the rest of our way in safety."

"Not a bit of it," replied Solomon. "It's a dangerous sign. Them's not the fellers to give up so easy. This is how I look on it. They don't see a chance of doing anything more for the hound in the boat while we've an eye on them. An' they're goin' to cross the creek above, and come down on us on this side."

"And what had we better do?" said Howard. "Fall back into the woods and leave the boat to its chances?"

"I don't want to lose my game," said Solomon. "After a day's steady huntin' it won't pay to come in empty handed, I vote that we catch the boat agin, and row out. They're reckoning that we won't miss them, and 'll keep on here like fools till they strike us from behind. I'm in for takin' the boat."

"You will have to swim for it then," said Du Bar.

"There is a point just below, where the creek sweeps to our side," said Howard. "It will come near shore there, and we may be able to draw it in from the bank."

"That's the idea precisely," said Solomon, hurrying forward to the point.

This movement took off their attention from the boat for a brief space, during which period the outlaw made several rapid movements, unobserved by them.

In a minute's time they reached the point, towards which the boat slowly neared. Solomon looked curiously into it as it approached.

"Hallo!" he suddenly cried. "What's this? I'll be blasted if it ain't empty!"

The others rushed up, and saw to their extreme surprise that he was correct. Where the prisoner had lain there was only a small heap of the cord with which he had been bound, and an open knife.

"It was a knife then they dropped him," said Howard. "And he has cut himself

loose, and slipped over the side while we were hurrying up here."

Solomon suddenly flung his rifle to his shoulder and pulled the trigger. The sharp report rang out loudly through the still woods. The bullet was seen to strike the water a short distance ahead.

"I jest caught a sight of his head above water, but he dove agin too soon for me," he said. "Keep your eyes on that pint where the bushes come down close."

The head appeared again for an instant, near the bushes in question, but instantly sunk.

"There's no use—the dog's at home in the water. He'll round the bend in this swim, and get into the bushes out of sight," said Solomon, wading to his knees in the water, and catching the boat with a long reach as it passed. "Now, boys, in with you, quick as lightning. Every minute here is dangerous. Five minutes' delay might be as much as our lives is worth. The Budds are not to be played with."

In a moment they were seated in the boat, Solomon pushed the dog in, gave a hard shove at the stern, and leaped in himself, and in an instant had out the oars and was forcing the boat with all his strength down the stream. They were just in time—for a minute or two afterward, the point they had just left was occupied by the party of their pursuers, who saw their escape with a yell of disappointment, and an ineffectual volley of bullets. A shout of triumph answered. Pulling steadily, in a minute more the fugitives were out of danger.

CHAPTER XII.

SALLY PRICE.

Miss Nelly had a visitor. Sally Price had called to spend the day and have a good talk. Sally was a farmer's daughter, living beyond Burton. A homely but good little creature—sometimes inclined to tease, and a favorite with Nellie Brown, partly, perhaps, for this reason.

Nellie had, after more important subjects failed, detailed at length the adventures of our friends in the swamp.

"Well, I'll declare," said Sally, "they certainly made a narrow escape with their lives. But how ridiculous it was of them to venture into such a place. I gave Solomon credit for more wit."

"It was not his doing, that you may be sure of. He is brave enough when he has to be—but I don't think he is foolhardy. Mr. Du Bar, it seems, proposed this expedition, and induced the others to join him."

"Which certainly showed ignorance of danger in your friend, Mr. Howard, and great folly in our mutual friend Solomon Muddle. It is only a fool that puts his head in a hornet's nest for enjoyment."

"Well, thank fortune, they all came out safely."

"More through good luck than good management. This Mr. Howard, Nellie; has he entirely recovered from his former hurt?"

"Not quite."

"Well, his wound cannot be serious, judging from his exertions the other day. What a pity they let that Budd escape."

"They certainly did the best they could to prevent it. These outlaws become so route by their constant life of danger, that they are prepared for every emergency. You know they have broken jail once or twice, and made other narrow escapes. But you hinted, just now, at some village gossip which you thought I should know. What are they saying that is likely to interest me?"

"A great many things are said that they have no right to say—but people will talk, you know, when a young man is attentive to a young lady."

"Well?" asked Nellie, rather sharply.

"It is said that Mr. Howard is very sweet upon Nellie Brown."

"They had better attend to their own business!"

"Now, Nellie, you know what people are, and that the talk of village gossips is hardly worth getting angry about. You surely would not rob our ancient maidens of the feeble solace of dissecting the love affairs of others?"

"There is no love affair about it. Cannot simple hospitality be exercised, without one being made the butt of gossiping tongues? They have no right to talk about me."

"There now, don't be absurd. You know the right to say everything of everybody is, from time immemorial, the property of maiden ladies of a certain age. Your nursing, your long talks on the porch, your boat rides together, are all proofs presumptive. Acknowledge now, my dear—positively is there not something in it?"

"Sally Price, you must be under training with these gossips. You have their exact formula for obtaining valuable knowledge. However, as it is you, and you and I are old friends, I don't mind telling you that there is nothing in it."

"Oh, you provoking! Now you know there is. You know that he has been sweet as honey, and you yielding as molasses. You know that he has proposed; and it is cruel in you not to tell me all about it."

"On the contrary, I have not the slightest reason to suppose that the man wants me; and nobody has reason to suppose that I want him. So I think your long-tongued friends are all astray. Mr. Howard is a gentleman, and feels naturally grateful for the service I have rendered him. Is not this enough to account for his slight attentions? Is it not possible for man and woman to be friends without being lovers?"

"Not in the eyes of those who do up the love business for our village. You surely wouldn't want to deprive them of a sensation. They don't have many, poor souls—so don't be hard-hearted. Why can't you fall in love with him then? It's high time you were falling in love with some one, and here's an elegant opportunity—and the public already apprised in advance."

"I am so sorry that I cannot perform my part of the programme with grace. But then you know I can't propose, and the gentleman won't. So what am I to do? If it was our mutual friend Solomon, now. There is no fear but he would be quick enough to propose if he thought there was a remote chance of my accepting."

"And why not Solomon? He is deep in love with you, I know. And where is the man would make a better husband."

"He is not to my taste, and not of my kind, so Solomon is not for me."

"I don't know what is lacking. Where is there an honester or more intelligent man in the whole neighborhood? He is rich, and everywhere respected. He lacks education, but he is a gentleman's son, and has gentlemanly instincts. What is the fault you find with him?"

"Do you not know that the lack of education is a fatal lack in good society—one that no other list of good qualities will atone for? I like and respect Solomon, but cannot assimilate with him."

"He is not an ignorant man, though he may be a little backward in book-learning. And I can't see that education gives more than a little superficial polish. The man is there, under it all."

"But not the same man. The mind is the real man, and a furnished mind is broader and more elevated in tone. Solomon has the narrowness of ignorance. He is one whom we can make a friend, but not a companion."

"It is not so, Nellie, and you know it. He is the prince of all the men about us, if he is homely, and lame in his speech. The poor fellow loves you; any one can see that. He is worth a dozen of these Howards and Du Bars, whom you prefer to him. You are treating him cruelly, and I can see that he is hurt by your behavior."

"My behavior! What do you mean? I certainly don't return his love, and may have shown it. I don't know of any other bad behavior. He tried to propose, and I wouldn't let him. How is it, Sally, since you appreciate him so much more highly than I can, that you don't set your cap for him?"

"Set my cap for him, indeed! I am no husband hunter."

"But if you should find a good one it would not be amiss. And here, according to your own showing, is just the man."

"Now, Nell Brown, I wish you wouldn't talk so. You are just trying to tease me."

"Why shouldn't you get married? Solomon is, as you say, a fine catch of a man. You are, permit me to say, a fine catch of a woman. Why can't you mutually catch each other. Be good to me, Sally; try and make him fall in love with you, and relieve me of his attentions."

"I can't get him to look at me, unless I am laughing and jesting with him. If I try to talk seriously, he is off in a fit of melancholy, and I know in a minute where his fancy has flown."

Nellie looked at her as she spoke with surprise. There was something in her tone far more than expressed itself in her words that told of suppressed feeling. Something that one must have passed a certain experience in life to properly appreciate, but whose true signification instantly flashed upon the mind of the listener.

"Why, is it possible?" she broke out impulsively. "I declare that I didn't dream of such a thing."

"Didn't dream of what?"

"That you yourself were in love with Solomon."

"Who said I was?" cried Sally, sharply.

"You said so. There is no denying it, my dear. You have let the cat out in earnest, and don't imagine that you can get back into the bag."

"I do love him!" cried Sally, impulsively throwing her arms round her friend, and hiding her blushing face on her shoulder. "But I wouldn't let him know it for the world, and it keeps me trying to be funny all the time, for fear he may see it."

"Why you scheming little hypocrite! And what made you want to make me fall in love with him?"

"Because he loves you, Nellie, and don't care a bit for me. And if it will make him happy to have you love him, I will have to bear it."

"Now, Sally, you are a goose. There is no man living worth so much self-abnegation. I won't have him, that's flat. So don't be wasting your disinterestedness upon me. Solomon and you are well suited to each other, and I am bound to make him fall desperately in love with you."

"Oh don't tell him what I have said! To think of my giving my love where it is not returned! But I couldn't help it, Nellie, indeed I couldn't. You'll promise not to tell it, now?"

"I won't whisper a word of the sweet tale, not even to the ears of morning; nor breathe it in a cornfield for fear the open ears might catch it up and prattle it to the curious winds. I will be a secret as midnight, and true as steel. But for all that he has got to fall in love with you. How I will go about it is none of your business. I don't know myself yet. But if I get my nets well spread you shall see him fall into them."

"I am afraid he despises me for my lightness and childishness, and if you try to influence him, you will just make things worse."

"Now don't interfere. There is to be no escape for him, I tell you, nor for you either."

"Now, Nellie, don't meddle in anything of the kind. You will be sure to fail."

"The brave hearted never fail, and I will enter the lists against this recreant Knight like a Crusader of old. But, I declare, here he comes now. And Mr. Du Bar is with him. Now, Sally, I am going to throw him into your hands, and martyr myself with the Charlestonian. Make the most of your opportunity, girl. Don't talk nonsense. Let him see that you have something in you besides trifling."

"I can't do it, I am afraid to talk naturally, for fear I should reveal too much."

"And suppose you do? Let people say what they will, I can't be made to believe that any gentleman thinks less of a lady from finding that she entertains a high opinion of him; I believe many men have grown to love ladies from no other cause. It does their hearts good to find their virtues appreciated; they are grateful accordingly; and gratitude you know, may turn to love."

"Hush! they will hear you."

The two gentlemen entered the grounds and walked rapidly up to the porch, on which the ladies were seated.

"Good-morning, ladies," said Du Bar, who was in advance. "I perceive you are enjoying this fine breeze."

"Trying to, I admit. Solomon, I am happy to see you. But don't you see your friend Miss Price?"

"He has no eyes for the moon when the sun is shining," said the latter, sarcastically.

"What, my saucy little Sally!" said Solomon, laughing. "Now, can't you be civil to me for once? I'm afraid to get in your light for fear I'll get moonstruck."

"Don't be afraid, I won't shine on you. My rays shall fall on more appreciative ground."

"Pray shine on me, Miss Price," said Du Bar, who had made her acquaintance on a previous visit. "You need not fear the light of your countenance will be wasted. It shall be my polar star, to which my heart shall turn like the needle to the pole."

"I fear my light, like your words, may prove all moonshine."

"Protect me, Miss Brown. I positively aver that I am not intending to be complimentary."

"You appear to be succeeding, then, much beyond your intentions."

"Well aimed, Nell," cried Solomon. "That was a dead shot. I was jest going to try a compliment too, but I think I'd better let it alone. They don't seem to take root well."

"They bear the only kind of fruit people can expect who plant such seed," said Sally. "Don't exhaust yourself in trying to get up one, Solomon. I fear your hostile effort may recoil upon your own head. We are armed in armor of proof against such weapons."

"Why cannot you two treat each other more civilly? One might imagine you were sworn foes from finding you always at sword's point. Only that I know that you are devoted allies, I might myself accept the same conclusion."

"Oh, it is all Solomon," said Sally. "He is all either sweet or bitter. Never touches the happy medium."

"Do your hear her now! And I as mild as a lamb, and she as spicy as red pepper. Luckily we understand one another, Sally, isn't it?"

"Understand one another!" cried Nellie. "Why, you never saw each other. Both of you live behind a mask. You have been persistently keeping one foot foremost all your lives, and that not the best. You only understand each other's faults, and know nothing of your good qualities."

"Now that's pure slander," said Solomon. "Sally has emptied the quiver of her wit on me so often, that I don't believe she's an arrow left that I haven't felt the pint of."

"And has never laid an ounce of salve on your wounds. And yet there's no better doctress. Come, I am going to leave you to yourselves for awhile, to give you a chance to come to an understanding. Mr. Du Bar, will you take a short stroll with me? Do 't you two stir. I want you to have a plain talk together. I doubt if you ever talked seriously to each other ten sentences in your lives."

"Come back, Nell, you dunno what danger you're leaving me in," cried Solomon, turning laughingly to his companion, whose face was suddenly tinged with red, while her hands displayed a nervous uneasiness not usual with her.

A gay laugh was all the reply given by Nellie and her companion, as they disappeared round the house.

"Well, I wonder what she means, anyhow?" said Solomon. "Is it all fun, or is there some sober earnest behind it? I never know how to take her—nor you neither, as she says true enough. How is it, Sally, that you are always trying to get a laugh on me?"

"It is a bad habit I have got into, and I wish myself that I could break from it. But you always keep it up so well, that you lead me on to be as saucy as I can."

"I remember when you could be as serious as anybody. But lately I think you've rather run the thing into the ground. I think sometimes that you don't like me over well, an' then agin I think it's jest lively spirits."

"Oh, Solomon! If I didn't like you I wouldn't joke with you!" she cried, hastily.

"Thank you, Sally. I take that as right from your heart. Had to ambush for it, though, and surprise you into it. But it's only a liking. Ain't there any way to get any of you girls past a liking?"

"There are ways enough, if you knew them."

"I know it's mostly my own fault, leastways the fault of my face and edducation, which is always in my way," said Solomon gravely.

"No people, except fools, fall in love with a face," she replied with a hasty, nervous intonation. "Your face and education have nothing to do with it."

"Then what is the cause? Here am I, a likely fellow enough, well to do, and no fool, if I must say it myself. An' yet I can't make one clean step towards a girl's heart."

"Towards one girl's heart, you mean. But because one fish escapes your net, is that a proof that there are none others to be caught in the sea? You are wasting your love and your time on Nellie Brown," she replied, though in surprise at her own temerity.

"I fear so myself. I thought once maybe she didn't know her feelings, an' if I'd got up a little flirtation with somebody else, it might bring her over."

"It wouldn't thou. You had better quit thinking about her. As long as she tells me I must be serious, I will be serious enough to tell you that your fancy for her will make a fool of you if you don't give it up."

"Well, who is to replace her in my fancy? You know the neighborhood, Sally: give me a hint."

Sally, who had been speaking latterly with a great many nervous qualms, at this direct question experienced so severe a palpitation of the heart that she was quite unable to answer, and after an incoherent attempt, leaped up and ran blushing into the house, leaving Solomon overwhelmed with surprise.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LETTER.

"It's my private opinion as something ought to be done," said Solomon, tipping his chair back at a dangerous angle. "These hounds has had things their own way a leetle too long, an' it's about time for honest people to take a hand in the game."

"Very true," said Howard. "Yet unless we raise the whole country, and invade the swamp in force, there is no hope of reaching them."

"It should be tried then," said Du Bar. "It is simply an outrage that such a gang of ruffians should rob and murder at their own will. There must be some means of bringing them to an account."

"There's a mighty poor show," said the innkeeper, within whose bar-room the three friends were seated. "They know that swamp jest as well as I know this house. They've twenty hiding places in it, and could pick off a party one by one, till there'd not be a soul left."

"I don't know about that," said Solomon. "We was through a smart piece of the swamp, an' I think we come out fust best. If we'd had a large party we might have given them sumthing to remember."

"Well, you know, Sol," said Bradly, "that it's been tried on more than once. Do you recollect the fight we had with them on the edge of the swamp? It was a hard ting, and I think we came out at the little end of the horn."

"I don't know about that. We shot their ringleader, that was something."

"They've as good a one in his place."

"It's a bad business," said Du Bar. "There must be some way to suppress these ruffians."

"If they're not suppressed they'll suppress the county next," said Bradly.—"There's fifty murders to their account now."

"How is it that no determined effort has been made to capture them?" asked Howard.

"You see it was mostly during the war. They were joined by a set of deserters, and some escaped Yankee prisoners, and there weren't men enough left in the country to watch them. They had things pretty much their own way."

"And what induced them to take to this life?"

"It's an old thing," said Solomon. "The father of the flock was a Portugee, and they was one time decent farmers, living on the edge of the swamp. But for a hundred years back they've been mixin' with Injin and nigger till now they're a regular conglomeration. Old Allen Budd was more Injin than anything else, an' there's a nigger in the gang now, George Milkwhite, who's as black as a coal, an' is married to one of the Budd girls. So you see they're a sweet set. During the war the people come together, and caught them outside their holes. It was a right smart fight we had. Joe an' me had a hand in it. Old Budd an' his oldest son was kil'ed, but the rest got off. There's been some of them hung since, but there's seven or eight left, an that's as good as fifty with the swamp to hide in."

"A half dozen of them, you say, is equal to fifty," said Howard. "Why not raise fifty then, or a hundred if necessary, and sweep them out? I propose that one of us go to Lumberton and have a talk with the sheriff of the county. With the present feeling of the people a force might easily be raised sufficient to crush this brood of serpents in their den."

"There would be little use in it," said Du Bar. "I am told that it has been tried several times already, and more harm than good resulted. They have killed a dozen citizens for every one of them placed *hors de combat*."

"I don't agree with you. The knowledge we have lately gained of the interior of the swamp will be a great point in our favor. And, besides, we have your word for it that you have hunted through it several times before. It puzzles me how you can have done so without encountering this gang of outlaws."

"I cannot understand it myself. It was several years ago. At the time I was warned of their presence, but did not believe it. They must have been absent during my trips, as I saw not the least evidence of them. I found paths, to be sure, but judg'd they were made by negro hunters. That is why I was so skeptical of the whole story when we went on our expedition the other day. But after what we saw then I am quite well satisfied that the Budds are there: and am not at all anxious to meet them again."

"I should judge not," said Solomon, looking at him out of the corners of his eyes. "If you want to try swamp-shooting again count me out, unless it's Budd-shooting. I'm in on that."

"Faith, you had a pretty scare altogether," laughed the host. "When I saw you come driving in as if the deuce himself was at your heels, I took it that you'd found larger game than you bargained for. I wouldn't have tried my luck at going in there for all the bear meat this side of the Rocky Mountains, and to tell the truth didn't half expect to see any of you again. I know, though, that there weren't no use trying to stop you, so I held my tongue, and saved my breath."

"It was a close shave, that's sure," said Solomon. "But how about Lumberton?"

"I will go there," said Howard. "There will be no harm in talking the matter over with the authorities even if nothing comes of it. We may organise some plan of operations."

"When will you go?" asked Du Bar.

"The day after-morrow, if nothing happens to prevent. I am engaged for to-morrow."

A few minutes afterward Mr. Howard and Du Bar strolled out of the house together, leaving the two others still seated conversing. They walked slowly down the road, talking on indifferent subjects.

"So you have matter on hand for to-morrow, and I was going to ask you to accompany me on a visit to the turpentine distilleries," said Du Bar. "Is this engagement of yours imperative?"

"Not particularly so, and yet I think I would prefer leaving the turpentine district for some other time."

"Well, I'll go gunning then. That is my solace in all disappointments. Is not that more tempting to you?"

"No, I prefer rowing. The fact is I promised Miss Brown to take her out rowing to-morrow, and prefer not to break my word."

"Oh, a promise to the ladies of course takes precedence. I am glad, however, she has chosen you as her oarsman, as I detest the water."

"I enjoy it. Rowing has always been a favorite pastime with me."

"I have no more to say. You may depend the time will not hang heavy on my hands."

"By the way, will you excuse me? It has just occurred to me that I have some letters to write, which I have been neglecting too long already."

"Certainly. And would be glad if you would write up a few for me, as that is another of my detestations. I'll take a stroll down here by the creek while you are paying your epistolary debts. My correspondence must wait a little longer."

"DEAR FATHER," so ran Howard's letter, "you may think I am spending my time to very little purpose. I think so myself. I have found so little of a tangible character to take hold of that I am at a loss how to proceed. I have picked up here and there a hint which looks as if there is something in the history of Miss Brown's parents which she herself is not aware of. But the whole amounts to little more than what I wrote you concerning the story of the old negro. And the name seems to settle the matter so far as she is concerned.

"You must perceive then that my quest has been almost useless. Still I do not feel like leaving here just yet. There is a sort of presentiment in my mind that we are on the right path, and that it will prove so before long, though I cannot see the slightest indication how it is to come about. Probably the true source of my fancy is the attempts that have been made upon my life. Within a few days past I have had another narrow escape. Do not worry, though, on this account. I foolishly put myself into danger, but promise that I will be more heedful in future." (Here followed a description of the adventure in the swamp.) "I fully believe that in the course of the next week or two I shall have something interesting to write you. If it turns out otherwise, I will give up all faith in presentiments, and only believe in facts that I can see and touch. Don't be troubled about my escapes, so long as they are escapes.

"Your Affectionate Son,
"ROBERT HOWARD."

Descending to the porch his eyes were accosted by the figure of a small statue in ebony, that, transgressing the ordinary laws of nature, stood upright upon its head.

"Why, Pete, you young rascal, what brings you here?"

The statue instantly achieved a semicircular movement, lighting on its feet, and there stood Pete, his face a dark array of grins.

"Well, Mass Howard, Pete were jest out takin' a walk for him health dis fine mornin', an' got round dis way."

"Then you had better be getting home as soon as possible, or you may not find it good for your health."

"Dat's my way, now. You see I jest bin takin' the air."

"The air of a good switch I think would be good for you once in a while. Eh, Pete? Don't you think that would set your blood in circulation?"

"I tink it would set me in circulation," replied Pete, grinning. "Dey'd have to cotch me fust."

"Pete, can I trust you to take a letter for me and put it in the postoffice at Burton? It is an important letter, mind, and I don't want to run any danger of losing it."

"Dere's not a bit ob danger. I done take all Missis Nelly's letters."

"Here it is then, and something for you to invest in candy when you get there. But if I hear of your dropping it on the way, it will be all up with you; I will hang you up on the first tree."

"Dat's mighty small account," said Pete, climbing with the agility of a monkey up a tree that stood before him. In a moment he was hanging head downward from one of the lower limbs, his round ebony face distorted with a laugh that had the curious effect of seeming turned upside down.

"Come down, sir," cried Howard, laughing at the lad's antics.

In another minute Pete stood on the ground, reaching out his hand for the letter.

"Dat's what I calls hangin'. Gib me de letter, an' trust Pete. It 'll be as safe as if it was in the postoffice. I'll be thar in an hour."

"Be off with you then, and don't stop to play in the road." Giving him the letter, he returned into the house.

Any one looking with preternaturally sharp vision into the woods at the side of the Sorrel Horse Inn, would have seen two pairs of eyes closely observing the interview just detailed. As Pete started demurely but rapidly on his way, the owners of these optical organs sank deeper into the woods, as if fearful of being seen.

"He has it," whispered one of them. "Keep an eye on him, and take him when there's nobody in sight, though there's not much danger of interruption at this time of day. I will wait for you down by the creek."

The other nodded assent, and glided, with the subtlety of an Indian, through the woods.

Pete went rapidly on. Not steadily, however. Steadiness to him was impossible. Now running, now slowly sauntering through an attractive patch of sunlight, now chasing a butterfly, now stopping for a private somersault in the road, or to examine the piece of crisp wealth which he was engaged in earning; he, nevertheless, made considerable progress.

Passing through a narrow piece of road, where it was quite overarched by the wide-spreading trees, he suddenly, on turning a curve, came upon a person seated on a fallen trunk by the road side.

He was a dark skinned, roughly dressed man, with something of the negro characteristics in his mouth and nose, apparently a mulatto. Pete walked demurely on, as if impressed with a sudden sense of responsibility, and not liking the appearance of this individual.

"Hold up thar, boy," said the stranger. "Sit down hyar a minut, I want to talk with yer."

"Can't do't," said Pete. "I's on bus'ness. You must scuse me."

"Come hyar, I say," cried the other, savagely.

Pete halted, looked a moment at the savage countenance of the man, then up and down the road, and into the woods on each side, as if seeking for an avenue of escape.

"You black hound, do yer want me to speak agin?" He strode up to Pete—who stood perfectly still, as if convinced of the inutility of flight—and lifting him by the collar, seated him on the log with a force that shook every bone in his body.

"Now, boy, gin me that letter yer got, an' quick, afore I smash yer."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

[The back numbers of THE POST to Jan. 6th, containing the previous chapters of this deeply interesting story, can be obtained of the publishers.]

IN THE TUNNEL.

The disastrous consequences which sometimes ensue from young people of opposite sexes being brought into proximity to each other in railway tunnels, are cleverly set forth in the appended verses:—

Riding up from Bangor,
On the Pullman train,
From a six weeks' shooting
In the woods of Maine,
Quite extensive whiskers,
Beard, moustache as well,
Sat a "student feller,"
Tall, and fine, and swell.

Empty seat behind him,
No one at his side;
To a pleasant station
Now the train doth glide.
Enter aged couple,
Take the hinder seat;
Enter gentle maiden,
Beautiful, petite.

Blushingly she falters:
"Is this seat engaged?"
(See the aged couple
Properly enraged.)
Student, quite ecstatic,
Sees her ticket's "through;"
Thinks of the long tunnel—
Knows what he will do.

So they sit and chatter
While the cinders fly,
Till that "student feller"
Gets one in his eye;
And the gentle maiden
Quickly turns about—
"May I, if you please, sir,
Try to get it out?"

Happy "student feller"
Feels a dainty touch;
Hears a gentle whisper—
"Does it hurt you much?"
Flax, shag, dang't a moment
In the tunnel quite,
And a glorious darkness
Black as Egypt's night.

* * * * *

Out into the daylight
Darts the Pullman train,
Student's beaver ruffled
Just the merest grain;
Maiden's hair is tumbled,
And there seem apparent
Cunning little curls
Caught in student's beard.

—*Harvard Advocate.*

A SKIRMISH WITH RED-SKINS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ALICE SWEETZER.

Far out on the prairies, far beyond the "Mighty Missouri," farther than the boldest pioneer had hitherto dared to erect his cabin, stood the humble cottages of Robert Hilliard and his staunch friend, Henry Allison.

Reverses of fortune in their Eastern home had deprived them of almost all their worldly goods, and despairing of regaining their lost property, they resolved to try their fortunes in the far West.

At the period of which we write, namely, the spring of 1857, Hilliard and Allison had just completed the erection of their humble dwelling, and were anxiously awaiting the arrival of a small party of their old neighbors from Eastern Pennsylvania, and the more anxiously because their own wives accompanied the party.

"It is now the fifteenth of April," remarked Allison to Hilliard—or as we shall hereafter designate him, Robert—"and our friends have not yet arrived; they assured us that the first day of April should witness their advent at our new home."

"I know it," replied Robert. "What say you, old boy, shall we take our knapsacks and shoulder our rifles and hasten to meet them?"

"With all my heart," replied Henry, "and unless some serious accident has befallen them, we shall surely meet them on the western side of the Missouri."

The preparations for the journey were aatily made, and the two young men speedily set out to meet their friends and those they loved. The days passed swiftly as they journeyed—borne up by the thoughts of soon meeting friends and loved ones—and the nights brought refreshing sleep, doubly refreshing by reason of dreams wherein they saw their journey over, and themselves seated around their own fireside, planning the joyous future.

Five days and nights had thus passed, and the morn of the sixth found them on the west bank of the "Big Muddy," and no sign of friend or foe. Our heroes were just in the act of pushing off a hastily constructed raft, made of material gathered from the piles of drift-wood, when the sharp crack of a rifle was heard a little distance up the river, causing them suddenly to turn their eyes in the direction of the sound. Henry not only heard the report of the rifle, but a sharp burning sensation in the left temple caused him to raise his hand quickly to the spot, and in the act he disengaged a brown lock, which fell at his feet, showing him too truly that the shot had been almost fatal."

"Jump for the shore, Robert!" cried Henry, "and make for the timber, and in case we are separated, repair to our last-night's camping place, and I will meet you there."

No time was given to gather their little stock of provisions, but hastily snatching up their guns, they fled toward the friendly shelter of the timbers; and not a moment too soon, for scarcely had they gained cover, when four or five Indians dashed off in pursuit.

Gaining the timber, our heroes would have had ample time to have secreted themselves, or to have plunged still deeper into the mazy depth of wood and jungle, which, at this point was nearly two miles in width, had not Henry resolved, as he expressed it, "to give the red devils thunder." Taking cover behind a huge sycamore, he leveled his gun, waiting the approach of the Indians: they advanced with a rush—five to two; they expected an easy victory. On they came, making the woods resound with their hideous yells, when suddenly the rifle of Henry gave forth a note of defiance, and the foremost of the savages gave a leap in the air, and fell a corpse upon the ground. Henry stood a moment, expecting to hear a similar *good report* from Robert's rifle. Judge of his astonishment—on looking around for his companion—to find that he was nowhere to be seen. Hastily concluding that his friend had deserted him, he, during the momentary halt of his pursuers, darted rapidly forward, hoping to escape by flight, reloading his piece as he ran. The Indians saw the move, and pursued, taking care, this time, to keep themselves sheltered as much as possible, in order to escape the fate of their late "noble brother." The advantages of the race were on Henry's side, owing to the Indians having to keep their eyes upon him, while he ran freely, trusting to the intervening trees for safety. But what was his sudden dismay, as he leaped a little stream and climbing up the steep bank on the opposite side, he beheld an open reach of ground, nearly a quarter of a mile in width; his spirits sank within him; and he gave himself up for lost. He knew that his pursuers would reach the little stream he had just leaped before he could gain the shelter of the timbers on the other side of the glade before him. However, he resolved to sell his life dearly, and, turning his head, he at that moment saw the foremost of his foes unsheltered—that moment was the Indian's last—the bullet from Henry's rifle, true to its aim, sped to its mark, and another "noble red man" bit the dust.

By this time the remaining Indians, three in number, had gained the bank of the stream, and in quick succession discharged their guns at our hero, but happily without effect; and before either party could reload, a single report, as if fired from the rear of the Indians, caused Henry's hopes again to spring up; having by this time reloaded his piece, he darted across the remaining open space, and with a sigh of relief, gained the shelter of a tree.

"You red villains, I've got you now," soliloquized Henry, "I'll fix one of you with this charge of powder and ball—and await the inevitable rush of the other two with my revolver."

Throwing himself prone on the ground, our hero waited further developments; he had not long to wait, however, for again that mysterious single report of a rifle rang out, and a moment after a single savage, with a yell of rage and terror, leaped out of the ravine, and darted off at right angles from the line of pursuit.

The Indian was now too fair a mark for Henry's rifle to be let off scot-free, so he gave him, as he said, "a parting shot." The savage was seen to raise his hand quickly in the direction of his scalp lock, which he, no doubt, thought was in danger, and redoubling his efforts, was soon lost in the timber.

The lengthening shadows already foretold the near approach of night; and our hero was casting about in his mind the probable direction of the camp of last night, when he was aroused from his meditations by a cheery "Halloo," and looking up, saw standing before him the "deserter," Robert Hilliard. A few words sufficed to make the matter of the "desertion" clear to the somewhat muddled brain of Allison, and the substance was this: At the moment of their first taking cover near the river, Robert could not find a tree suitable for a shelter, and while Henry was busy watching the Indians, he had run a few rods to the right, as he afterward learned, unperceived by the Indians. As luck would have it, after the first Indian fell, Henry fled in the opposite direction, and the Indians in hot pursuit, thus placing themselves between two fires; with what cost to themselves the reader has already surmised. It was the report of Robert's rifle that had equally astonished friend and foe—and now, four of the enemy "*hors de combat*" by their equal prowess, our friends apprehending no more danger, rapidly retraced their steps to the river, not without difficulty, however, for darkness had by this time come on.

They reached the river at a point about a mile from the place of their departure, and following the stream down, they hoped to find the provisions which they had left on the raft at the moment of their sudden surprise. Imagine their feelings, when, on turning a short bend in the river, they saw two or three bright fires burning at the very spot they had so unceremoniously left a few hours before—listening, they had the unspeakable satisfaction of hearing their own names spoken. Taking precautions to announce themselves before approaching too near, they were greeted by a genuine "hurrah!" and the next moment were in the midst of friends, and in the embrace of loving arms.

We draw the curtain over the meeting of husbands and wives, sacred in itself, doubly so in view of the recent perils of our heroes; and while they narrated the events of the day, devout thanksgivings were sent up to Him "who numbereth the hairs of our heads," for thus preserving the lives of their loved and noble companions.

Nothing further of note transpired during the remainder of the journey, and the happy party rested the third day at the abiding place of Hilliard and Allison. And now, tiful village dots the plain, and the sweet sound of the Sabbath bell is heard calling to worship those who toiled to make this wilderness blossom as the rose, where there was an unbroken prairie, a beau-

☞ In a California theatre, a few nights since, a large red apple fell from the gallery and struck squarely upon the bald and shining pate of a gentleman in the dress circle, then bounded into the orchestra and broke a fiddle.

☞ A poor woman in Council Bluffs dressed fifty chickens and twenty turkeys for market the day before Thanksgiving, and had them all stolen from her woodshed at night.

☞ Mlle. Schneider, who has been killed so many times—by newspapers—both here and abroad, and has served as matter for numerous lengthy necrologies, far from flattering, has resuscitated once more to grace the boards of the Parisian theatres.

☞ A sentimental chap intends to petition Congress for a grant to improve the channels of affection, so that henceforth the course of true love may run smooth.

☞ A gentleman of Norwich, Ct., has a beard which measures four feet in length, falling nearly to his ankles when he stands erect, and which is still growing. They don't have to buy any store hair in his family.

☞ Leap-year parties are already beginning to be given in New York, the ladies asking the gentlemen to dance and waiting upon them at the supper table.

☞ Portly Female (to driver of Hansom cab.)—"Be careful, cabman; I'm so afraid of his tumbling down. It's very slippery on that pavement." Cabby.—"All right, mum! You 'set' well back, mum, and I'm blessed if he could go down if he tried!"

☞ A Mr. C——— having threatened to institute a $50,000 libel suit against the St. Louis Democrat because that paper had expressed the opinion that he was worth five dollars to any political party, offers this retraction in mitigation of damages:—"Mr. C——— is not worth five dollars to any political party; he is not worth a d—ollar."

☞ The wife of an Illinois octogenarian recently presented the patriarch with a thirty-fourth child.

☞ A well-known gentleman, who had been out dining at a friend's with his lady, driving home after dinner mistook the way, and made such numerous blunders that she began to fear that her excellent spouse had taken more wine than was wise, and she ventured to hint the same. "Never you fear—fear, my d-d-dear," said he; "I'll get you home all safe, if—if the *h-h-horse only holds together*." He wasn't the worse for liquor! not at all.

☞ Slow mails trouble the Texans. The State Journal says:—"We mailed a business letter to Bastrop on the first of the month, which arrived there on the 12th, travelling at the rate of three miles a day. The reply came in four days. The distance is thirty-five miles. When ever we contemplate the mail facilities of Texas, we are struck speechless with admiration."

AT LAST!

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

In all the world there were only four things I cared for,—my mother, my books, my flowers, and Rose Deane.

Rose Deane!—with her yellow hair, and her blue, bewildering eyes. I think I never saw any one half as beautiful as she was. Perhaps it is because I loved her. I used to sit and watch her on the long, quiet Sabbath days, when we were at church, and dream,—such beautiful, tender, impossible dreams of what might have been if I had been like other people.

For I was lame. From my earliest hour of remembrance I had gone about with a crutch for support. I never could run nor play as other boys could, therefore I had kept apart from them at school, and as I grew older I came to depend almost wholly on my mother and myself for amusement. We had but few friends. We lived a quiet life together in our little home, and tried to be contented with our lot. I never troubled mother with my vain longings and regrets. It would have been useless to do so. She had enough to think of, without worrying over what could not be helped. I often sat in the long summer twilight, and thought what I *would have done* if I had been like other men. But I was *not* like other men, and so my dreams were idle ones.

Rose Deane was our most frequent visitor. I often wondered why it was so. She was young, and beautiful, and life held few, if any, cares for her. I wondered what she could see in me, a quiet, thoughtful man whose world lay inside the four walls of his garden, and in my mother, who was quiet like myself, with a touch of sadness in her nature, to attract her. Whatever it was, she came often, and while her sweet, bird-like voice rang through our little rooms, and her face made sunshine everywhere, I forgot everything else, and was happy. Life, at such times, was a beautiful dream. Waking hours might bring back the remembrance of cold and hard reality, but the dream was none the less sweet for all that. I did not look ahead. I dared not. I made myself content with the present, and trusted the future to the future.

Even now, my pulses thrill with a strange ecstacy of newer, gladder life as I think of the long, sweet hours of the summer days when Rose Deane's eyes held me in their strange and pleasant spell. I am an old man now, and my hair is gray with the frost of many years, but the old memories come back to me as though it were but yesterday that Rose,—my June rose I called her,—was with me. I close my eyes, and again I am out among my flowers with her, and I gather pink carnations, full of spicy scents, and white roses, with creamy tints about their fragrant hearts, and heliotropes, full of subtle, tropic perfumes, and give them to her as she says good-by, thinking her the fairest flower of them all.

So the days glided by; by-and-by a change came. I might have *known* that life could not go on forever as it had done, if I had thought about it; but I *dared* not, you see: for although I would not allow myself to think, some under-current of the truth impressed itself upon my mind, and *I felt*, in a vague way, that sometime there must be a change. But so long as the change was uncertain and not at hand, I tried to put the doubts and shadows of the coming time aside. They would have enough trouble in them when they came, without borrowing any beforehand.

One summer a young man came to Ashmead. A dark, handsome fellow, with keen cold eyes that always made me shudder when I caught their glance, and think of craftiness and cruelty. He was unlike the young men of the village, and became popular at once. Rumors came to me that he was paying suit to Rose Deane, and that Squire Deane was greatly displeased at the turn events were taking.

I woke up then to the full sense of the truth. I loved Rose Deane as I could never love any one else on earth, but she was not for such as me. It was better to face the truth at once, even if it did bring the bitterness of death with it. She was not for me.

Rose did not come to visit us as often as usual that summer. I could see that other things were busying her thoughts. I would sit and watch her sweet, beautiful face and think of what *had been*, and of what could *never be*, and the pain at my heart would grow so clamorous and fierce, that I could feel the color surging from my face, leaving me white and cold as some faces are when they stand face to face with death, and see some dear one drifting away from them, and know that the happiness they have known they will know never any more! My dream, my beautiful, sweet dream was fading away, but its memory could never die—and that grew all the sweeter, as I thought of what life held for some one else, but not for me.

One day Rose came to see us. There was a faraway look in her eyes—a thoughtful, half-sad expression on her face, which was something new and strange to see there. She was usually the blithest, bounciest creature in the world.

When she bade mother good-night, she kissed her, and seemed loth to go. I thought I saw tears in her eyes, and a sharp pain made itself felt in my heart. Perhaps the dream was almost ended, the sweet days almost gone. This might be the last one—and the knowledge that it might be, pained her. Oh! my little June-rose! She had never seemed so fair as then to me!

I went out into my garden with her. I shall never forget how everything looked. Far away the meadows stretched themselves beneath the slanting rays of the low, western sun. The river flowed through them, shining like a band of silver, and the willows on its banks leaned down to dip their lithe and flexible branches in the rippling waters. The cows were coming home along the country lanes, and the tinkle of their bells made pleasant music. Coming up from the village church I could hear the sound of singing, with the deep tones of the organ like an undertone of sadness.

She was silent for some time. I pulled a few straggling weeds from the borders, and tied up some lilies whose stalks had blown down.

By-and-by she spoke.

"I think you care for me, Douglas—just a little, don't you?" she asked, coming up to me, her sweet, blue eyes full of a soft light, like little shadowed springs of lucid water, upon which the sun breaks through the branches of the trees which overshadow it.

Her words touched my heart in its tenderest spot.

"Oh, Rose! my little June-rose!" I cried, "you know I care for you! I love you!"

Oh! foolish lips! that could not keep back the words which should not have found utterance.

"You love me?" she questioned: "do you mean it, Douglas?"

"Oh, Rose! forgive me!" I cried. "I should only pain you if I told you more. I ought never to have said that. Think of me as your friend, your truest friend always."

"My truest friend!" she repeated. "Will you always be that, come what may?"

"Always and always," I answered. "If you need a friend, come to me. I shall never cease to care for you, Rose. I can never forget."

"I am glad you are my friend," she said, slowly, "but I am sorry you love me, because—because—"

Her voice faltered, and her eyes grew full of tears.

Then a little silence fell about us. The sun sank out of sight, and the meadows grew shadowy and dim. The river lost itself among the mists of the summer night, and overhead the evening star shone out from the clear sky, a jewel on the breast of night.

"You must remember," she said, at last, "You've promised to be my friend always, come what may. I don't know what makes me talk so, to-night, but—you'll remember."

"Oh Rose, my little June rose, I could not forget!" I cried, with a great vain yearning at my heart to fold her in my arms.

"I am glad of that," she said. "But I must go. I hate to say good-night, though."

I gathered some flowers for her, but they were pansies only, great purple pansies, with yellow hearts, about which clung a fragrance that is indescribably sad to me now, when memories of that evening come back to me.

"You know what they say," I said, giving them to her. "I think of you."

"I will keep them always, to remember you by," she said, with a little quiver in her voice. "I wish you would kiss me, once, Douglas."

I kissed her once and again with a fluttering in my heart, as if a thousand birds were caged there, and struggled to get loose. Once I saw a mother kiss her child as it left this earthly shore forever. I think I felt something as that mother felt in her love and loss, and sense of keenest sorrow. I knew that I was going to lose my darling. I felt it in my heart.

"Good-by," she said, putting her hand in mine for a moment, and then she turned away hastily, and went down the street. I watched her out of sight, and then went in and sat down by the window, with such a sense of desolation clinging to me as I never had felt before.

On the morrow the tidings came to me that Rose, my little June rose was gone! Her father had refused to accept the proposal which her lover made for her hand, and ordered her to be seen with him no more. Love had proved stronger than her sense of obedience to parental law, and she had fled with her lover, whither no one knew.

"As she has made her bed she must lie in it," the stern old Squire said. "She can never darken my doors again."

The months slipped by and autumn and winter faded into the past, and spring came with its promises of what was to be. The snow began to melt along the sun-touched meadows, and the sky took on a tenderer flush of blue.

One night I sat before the fire, and thought of Rose. Never a word had we heard from her since she went away. She might be dead for all we knew. Dead! my little June rose dead! The thought was a bitter one. I had no other memories in all my life so sweet as those of her.

"Wasn't that sound at the door?" asked mother. "I thought so. It's a bitter, bleak night for the season, with this rain and sleet. Maybe some one wants admittance."

I got up and went to the door. I opened it—a figure lay across the steps.

"Who is it?" I asked, bending down.

"It is I, Douglas," whispered a voice, faint and husky. "Don't you know me? your little June rose? I've come back to you!"

Oh! such a wan, white, pitiful face as was lifted to mine. Such sorrowful, sorrowful eyes!

"Rose! Rose!" I cried, gathering the slight, fainting form in my arms, with a great thrill of gladness running through me like electric fire. "My darling, and you've come back to me."

"You know you said you'd be my friend always," she said, faintly. "Father turned me from his door, and I hadn't anywhere else to go but to you."

"You shall never be turned away from my door," I cried fiercely, as I bore her into the room where mother was. "I'm not hard and cruel enough for that."

We put her in the great arm-chair before the fire, and mother got her into some dry clothes, and made her drink some wine, and try to eat a little.

"I can't!" she said, pushing away the plate. "It chokes me!"

She was only a shadow of her former self. The light had faded from her eyes, and the youth was gone out of her face and life.

By-and-by she told us her story. The man who had won her heart was a villain, and had never, as he had solemnly promised, given her the name of wife. After awhile, when she would not be content longer with his promises, he grew tired of her, and by-and-by turned her out into the world, a waif on the great sea of humanity, drifting hither and thither, she knew not where. She knew that her father's anger was hot against her, but at last she had resolved to make an appeal to him. She had asked admittance, and he had turned her away, with harsh and bitter words.

"I had nowhere else to go, save here," she said. "Like enough, you'll turn me away, now that you know what a sinful, erring creature I am."

"I promised to be always your friend," I said; "I will never turn against you."

She had come back to me! That thought kept whispering to me all the time. Forsaken by all the world, she had sought me, and now she was mine, all mine, at last!

She grew a little stronger after that, but I could see that she was not long for this life. The thought was one of mingled joy and sorrow. I must lose her; and yet, up there she would be all mine, and no one could take her away from me any more!

"I wish I might live to see your flowers blow," she said, one day, when the willows were putting on a tender flush of green. "I used to sit and think of you and your flowers, and I could smell them as though they were all around me. And, oh Douglas! after he began to be so cruel to me, I used to think of you, and I think I got to loving you more than I loved him."

"My little June rose!" I cried, and clasped her to my bosom. She loved me, and I was content. I could the more easily let her go after that.

She grew weaker as the spring advanced. The pansies and June roses budded in the garden, and the honeysuckle grew green about the windows. A little robin came and began to build her nest in the rose-bush by the door.

"I would so like to smell the pansies again before I die," she said, wistfully. "It would be easier to go, after that, I think."

Her wish was granted. One day the pansies opened their yellow hearts to the sun, and I carried her to the window that she might see them.

"Oh, beautiful! beautiful!" she cried. "I have those pansies yet you gave me when I said good-by to you. Oh! I can die so much easier now. I hated to go before the flowers came."

I drew up a great easy-chair, and we sat her down in it by the window. The sun was going down in the beautiful west. The robin sang in the rose-bush by the door.

"I wish you'd get me some pansies," she said; "they're such beautiful things! They never disappoint you. Come foul weather or fair, they are always the same brave, true flowers. They're like you, Douglas. When I die I want some of them on my bosom, to keep there when I'm asleep under the sod: and I want you to plant some on my grave, with a June rose at my head! I don't want any other thing there,—no stone with my name on it,—only just the pansies and the June rose. That'll tell the name you gave me, and the pansies will keep whispering down to me through the grass above me. 'He thinks of you! He thinks of you!'"

Tears blinded my eyes, so that I could hardly see to gather the purple pansies for her. I little thought that even then she was dying. I brought the blossoms and put them in her hand.

"They always blow, in rain or shine," she said. "They'll never disappoint you, and you're like them, Douglas. You're true as the pansies are. They're such sweet things!"

She held them to her lips and against her cheek. I sat at her feet and watched her.

"Kiss me, Douglas!" she suddenly whispered. "It's growing dark, isn't it? I can't see you."

A sudden revelation of the truth came to me.

"Rose, Rose," I cried, "here I am. Don't you see me, darling?"

"I can't see you, but I smell the pansies," she whispered. "I think I'm dying. Hold my hand, and kiss me, Douglas."

I kissed her, great tears falling on her poor pale face.

"Douglas, Douglas," she said softly, closing her eyes. "Oh! I smell the pansies. They're such true, sweet things."

There was a little flutter of her hand, a quiver of her form, and my June rose had gone to the beautiful garden of God.

Looking up, I saw the vesper star shining in the blue sky, pure and radiant. Looking down, I saw that the buds on the June rose by the door had burst into sudden bloom.

"My sweet June rose!" I cried, kissing the dead face, grown suddenly peaceful, "you are as pure as any blossom there. Your white soul, washed pure by the blood of Christ, has blossomed with them into the new life which shall never vex you with its cares and sorrows. You are mine, all mine!"

We made her a grave in the garden. Great pansies blossom there the long long summer through, and even underneath the frost and snow of winter. It is because I think of her. The blossoms are the thoughts which I send her from my heart. My sweet June rose! More sinned against than sinning, *up there* she is a fair *white* rose, I know, and she is mine, *all mine!*

LOVE ON SKATES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

I threw down the last number of the Post impatiently, as my sister Kate entered the room. Kate was an incessant talker, and I knew that it would be utter folly for me to attempt to read while she was present. I walked to the grate, lit a cigar, and surveyed my handsome sister calmly and critically through a cloud of fragrant smoke.

"Well, Bob, I am going skating to-day," she announced.

"Are you, indeed?" I answered, puffing away at the weed.

"Yes. There will be quite a party on the river, and I want you to go also."

"The deuce!" I held my cigar between my fingers, and stared hard at Kate as she made this startling proposal.

"Do you know," I said, "that skating is a science I never undertook to master? It would be folly, nay, madness, for me to risk my life on the treacherous ice."

"Pshaw!" laughed Kate, "you could learn in a half-hour's time. Of course you will never learn unless you make a trial. Besides, you may gain a good deal by going. Laura Mills will be there, and also her devoted admirer, Tom Taylor."

"Well, what difference will that make to me?" I asked, trying to look unconscious.

"Why, Bob, you know you like Laura, and she has a good opinion of you. With your handsome face and graceful figure, you ought to make a good show on the ice, and let her see your advantages over Tom Taylor, who, although a good skater, is little and ugly. But if you stay away, you give your rival a clear field, and of course he will use every means in his power to win pretty Laura's heart. He is desperately in earnest, and his energy may more than make up for his lack of personal attractions."

"Are you sure that Miss Mills regards me favorably?" I asked, surveying myself anxiously in a large mirror. I believe I was a tolerably good-looking fellow: I was tall and straight, dark-haired and dark-eyed. My lip was adorned by a small moustache, which troubled me not a little by its unaccountably slow growth.

"I am perfectly sure that she admires you," returned my sister, "for I heard her tell Annie Dalton that she considered you the handsomest young man of her acquaintance. When a girl considers a man so very handsome, there is nothing to hinder him from winning her love."

"I think I will go," I said at length. "But stay—another difficulty arises. I have no skates, and it will take me too long to go to a shop and purchase a pair."

"You have a pair somewhere, Bob, that you bought last winter and never used. Hunt them up while I am getting ready."

After considerable rummaging over the house, I discovered the skates. I then brought out my most becoming winter clothing, and proceeded to make myself as irresistible as possible. By the time my preparations were completed, Kate came in, charmingly arrayed in short skirts and furs.

"Are you ready yet?" she queried, turning around before the mirror.

"Yes, my dear sis. I am ready, so let us start at once."

We—my mother, sister and I—lived in a neat little cottage overlooking the river, and a short distance from the town of — —. I was a gentleman farmer, moderately wealthy. I was a great admirer of the fair sex, but my innate modesty and bashfulness had kept me from ever making love to any of the gentle creatures, although I had reached the age of twenty-four.

A short walk brought us to the river, which was smooth and shining as glass. The day was extremely cold. It was the middle of December, and the first hard freeze of the season. The wind blew keenly from the North, and dark, driving clouds obscured the sun's feeble rays. Several youngsters were enjoying themselves on the ice, gliding back and forth, or skimming round and round in a manner that almost made my head swim. I repented of my rashness in resolving to learn to skate, and wished myself back at home, as the air was too chilly to permit any one to stand around and watch the sport.

Presently George Vance, my sister Kate's most devoted admirer, came along, and requested the honor of skating with her. After he had adjusted her skates, she took his hand, and away they flew over the shining ice. I stood for a moment irresolute, but at last sat down and proceeded to fasten on my skates. While I was thus employed, a couple came sliding along, and stopped for a moment before me.

"Hallo, Arley!" shouted the man, who was my hated rival, Tom Taylor, "going to try skating, are you? I advise you to be careful at first, as this ice is uncommonly hard."

"I thank you," I answered coldly, "I will take care of myself."

"What is the reason, Mr. Arley, that you never tried to skate before?" said Laura Mills, in her ringing, silvery tones. "The sport is most exhilirating, I assure you. It is much more to my taste than dancing, of which you are so fond."

"I must acquire the accomplishment, then, without delay," I answered gallantly.

"Do so, by all means," she laughed, "and after I have skated a little longer with Mr. Taylor, I shall be delighted to have you for a partner."

She gave me a bewitching glance from her lovely eyes as she said this, and the roses deepened on her rounded cheeks. My heart fluttered, and I felt the blood rush to my face.

"I shall hold you to your promise," I said, as they glided away.

Laura Mills was in my eyes the perfection of female loveliness. She was a neighbor's daughter, a stately blonde, with flowing yellow curls, violet eyes, and fair cheeks, that would

"Alternately whiten and glow
Like the dash of a ruby imprisoned in snow."

I had known her for a good while, and I may as well acknowledge that my manly heart was entirely in her possession. But, as Shakspeare says, "I never told my love, but let concealment, like a worm in the bud," &c. Her gracious manner inspired me with courage, and I resolved to lay my heart at her feet that very day. I did—and my head also—but I will not anticipate.

At last I got my skates adjusted to my satisfaction, and seeing nobody watching, I ventured cautiously upon the river. I attempted to strike out, as I had seen others do, but to my astonishment and chagrin, my heels flew up in the air, and the back of my head came in violent contact with the ice. As I gathered myself up to a sitting posture a young man of my acquaintance, Hal Edwards, came sliding easily along.

"Why, Bob Arley!" he exclaimed, "what the deuce are you sitting down there for? I should think the ice would feel uncomfortably cold."

"So it does, my dear fellow, and if I had not been a confounded fool I should not now be in such a position. You see, I thought I would learn to skate, but at the very first effort my feet slipped, and here I am, crippled for life, perhaps."

The young fellow pressed his hands to his sides, to prevent damages arising from excessive laughter. I could not see the joke, and gave him to understand as much.

"My dear Bob," he said, "you must excuse me. You really are a most ludicrous spectacle. Ha, ha! what if Miss Laura Mills should come along and see you in such a fix? Would she still think you handsome and dignified. I wonder?"

I cast a terrified glance up and down the river.

"My dear Hal, help me to my feet; I must not remain here any longer," I said.

"Certainly I will, and learn you to skate, also. With my assistance you can skate as well as any of us in a little while," answered the kind-hearted fellow.

I thanked him warmly, and grasping his hands, was soon upon my legs once more.

"Steady, now!" said my guide and protector. "Strike out boldly. Don't be afraid, I will not let you fall. Ah, ha! thus we go. I knew you would succeed."

By holding fast to my companion, I managed to maintain an upright position; and ere long I learned to strike out with a speed and freedom that called forth the warm praises of my friend.

"Never saw the like in my life," he averred. "Why, when I first undertook the business, it was two or three days before I could make any progress. If you continue to practice you will become the champion skater of America."

"All the praise is due to you, my generous instructor," I answered.

"By no means. To prove this, I am going to let you try your skill alone. Don't be afraid. Keep straight ahead, until you gain a little confidence in yourself."

I released my friend's arm, and glided onward alone. It seemed a very simple matter to skate now, and I grew bold as a lion. Presently I saw Miss Mills and Tom Taylor ahead. I resolved to pass them at the top of my speed, and thus show the lady that I was no longer a novice in such sports, and annihilate the gentleman by my superior grace and velocity. I accomplished my purpose with a vengeance.

The pair were skating slowly, apparently engaged in earnest conversation. Being unconscious of my approach, they used no means to avoid the avalanche that was soon to overwhelm them. I heard Laura's musical laugh ring out at her companion's merry words, and bitter jealousy arose in my heart. I put forth all my strength, and bore down upon them like an express train. But I had overrated my skill. However unapproachable I might be on a straight line, I had yet to learn the art of turning in circles. I had started directly toward the doomed couple, and I discovered that I could not change my course—that a collision was inevitable. I gave a shout of warning, and turned aside just enough to avoid the lady, and to bring the whole force of the shock upon Mr. Taylor. I sent him spinning forward like an arrow from a bow, and after staggering about for a moment, he fell upon the ice, as I supposed, demolished completely.

The collision caused me to lose my balance, and I once more measured my length on the frozen water. I felt a sharp pain in my head, my eyes grew dim, and then I lapsed into insensibility. How long I remained in this blissful condition I know not. When I revived, Miss Mills was bending over me, holding my hand, and watching my face with an anxious expression in her beautiful eyes.

"Are you badly hurt?" she asked, in low and tender tones.

I scrambled upon my knees, and passed my hands over my bruised skull.

"I am not hurt half as badly as I deserve to be, Miss Laura," I answered, "but I know you must think me an idiot."

"Why so, Mr. Arley?"

"Because I have acted so like a confounded fool. I really could not help myself, however. I intended to pass you—but not knowing how to skate—when I got started, I could not stop, nor change my course. Can you ever forgive me, dear Miss Mills?"

"Of course I can—I am not hurt in the least. Poor Tom Taylor, however, may think differently."

I glanced down the river, and saw that the unfortunate little fellow was being assisted to his feet by his friends. He was not dangerously hurt, so I was spared the pangs of remorse.

"I was going to say that I was sorry for your lover—but to tell the truth, I am not."

"My lover?" Pretty Laura opened wide her bewitching blue eyes, and looked at me in amazement. "Tom Taylor is not my lover—and never will be."

"Pardon me—but I know that he admires you greatly," I said.

"If he does, I do not care for him in the least," she replied.

My spirits rose. I forgot my aching head. I began to consider the accident a blessing in disguise.

"I know it is none of my business—but if you do not care for him, why do you accept his attentions?" I asked, watching her lovely face.

"I cannot get clear of him. I have been trying all the morning to avoid him—and I am almost thankful to you for ridding me of his presence, if your did use violent means."

I smiled and blushed. Why had I been such an ass as not to see dear Laura's preference of me long ago? I think the cause of true love would run much smoother, would the dear creatures meet bashful young gentlemen half-way. Surely it would be right to allow the fair sex to do a share of the wooing—when the occasion demands it.

"If you wish to avoid him, then," I said, getting upon my feet, "you must try skating with me, as I see he is coming towards us. Perhaps, with your assistance, I can manage to get along without further accidents."

She gave me her hand, and away we sped over the glistening ice. My heart throbbed exultantly, and my cheeks were flushed with happiness. My beautiful Laura, my darling, my ideal, was by my side, her soft hand pressed in mine, her sweet eyes smiling upon me. Tom Taylor, avaunt! there is no longer any hope for you!

Mr. Taylor passed us presently, skating alone, and very rapidly. He scowled fiercely, while I bestowed upon him a benign smile.

"Hello, Bob!" shouted my instructor, Hal Edwards, whirling past, "you fell the second time, did you? Be careful for the future—the third time is the charm, you know, and if you try it again you will certainly meet your death."

"I have a better guide now than you were, so that I do not feel alarmed," I laughed.

How swiftly the moments flew! The air grew colder, the wind rose, but I felt it not; the warmth at my heart defied the fury of the elements. Love's young dream is indeed the sweetest thing in life.

Onward we went, until nearly all the skaters were out of sight. Only one couple were ahead of us—probably they were lovers like ourselves. We increased our speed and passed them; I looked around; it was my sister Kate and her lover, George Vance. They were so absorbed in each other as to be utterly unconscious of our presence.

"Dearest Kate," I heard Vance say, "when shall the happy day be?"

"About New Year's, I suppose," was the low reply.

We passed on out of hearing, unnoticed. Presently Laura said, softly:

"So your sister is going to be married soon, is she?"

"So it appears," I answered, squeezing her little hand.

"Will not your mother be very lonely when she is gone?" she asked—artlessly, of course!

"Not if you will come and take her place," I said, astonished at my own boldness. "Oh, Laura, I have loved you so long and so well! Say yes, won't you?"

"Why, Mr. Arley, this is so unexpected." Of course she spoke the truth.

"But, Laura, you love me, don't you? I adore you as man never adored woman before! I would plead for your love on my knees, dearest girl—"

Ere I could finish this interesting sentence, the ice underneath my feet gave way, and I sank to my chin in the horribly cold water. Fortunately the river was not deep at this place, and I was in no great danger of being drowned; but the bath was anything but pleasant, and I struggled frantically to get out. Laura screamed for help, but seeing no one near, she sensibly undertook to rescue me herself.

"Oh, Bob, I love you, I love you! Keep yourself up, for my sake!" she said.

My darling was not a frail and feeble maiden, by any means; she was healthy and strong. Kneeling on the edge of the ice, she caught my hands in hers, and actually pulled me out of the chilling water, and landed me safely upon the solid ice. By this time several others came rushing to the scene of the disaster, and I was chaffed unmercifully about this fresh mishap.

"You know I warned you to be careful," said Hal Edwards. "I told you that the third time would be your death, and it might have been so, had not Miss Laura displayed such admirable presence of mind."

"Never go skating again, Arley; your own life and the lives of others would be constantly endangered," sneered Tom Taylor.

"'All's well that ends well,'" said my prospective brother-in-law. "I now propose that we all go home, as Bob must feel uncomfortable in his frozen clothes."

My sister Kate was married on New Year's day, and ere many months Laura and your humble servant followed her example. Although my wooing was a rough and somewhat ludicrous affair, I think my beautiful wife loves me none the less on that account.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A TREATISE ON ENGLISH PUNCTUATION; Designed for Letter-writers, Authors, Printers, and Correctors of the Press, and for the use of Schools and Academies. With an Appendix, containing rules on the use of capitals, a list of abbreviations, hints on the preparation of copy and on proof-reading, specimen of proof-sheet, etc. By JOHN WILSON. Twentieth edition. Published by Woolworth, Ainsworth & Co., 51, 53, 55, John street, New York; 111 State street, Chicago; and also for sale by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philada.

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OLD AND NEW, for January, 1872, contains "Six of One by Half a Dozen of the Other," "The Gate Called Beautiful," "The Organ-Blower," "Modern English Novels," and other good reading matter. Published by Roberts Brothers, Boston.

☞ A PRACTICAL VIEW.—This is the way the convalescence of the Prince affected a Western mentor of public morals—The Indianapolis Journal: "We have ordered the printers to distribute the able obituary notice of the Prince of Wales, prepared expressly for the Evening Journal by our foreign editor. It contains a great deal of valuable and interesting information about English affairs, all of which our readers must lose in consequence of the pig-headed obstinacy of Wales in refusing to die when the doctors gave him up."

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PROSPECTUS FOR 1872.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

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The publishers of THE LADY'S FRIEND have concluded to reduce its price to single subscribers from $2.50 to $2—the prices to Clubs (already very low) remaining the same.

They shall continue to obtain for their readers the very best novelets, stories, poetry, etc., that can be procured, including articles from the gifted pens of Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss A. L. Muzzey, Daisy Ventnor, August Bell, Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, A. M. Dana, Madge Carroll, Emma B. Ripley, Nora Perry, M. C. Pyle, Ida Rowland, etc., etc., etc.

The following novelets, with the usual variety of short stories, are announced for 1872:

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OR,
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UNA AND HER LIONS.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "One Woman's Experience," "Jealousy," etc.

QUEEN COQUETTA.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Prince Charming, etc., etc.

ONLY A WISH.
By A. M. DANA, author of "Jarring Chords, etc., etc.

MISSION WORK.
By MRS. MARGARET HOSMER, author of "A Turn in Fortune's Wheel," etc., etc.

AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "Solid Silver," "A Little Money," etc.

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☞ The Pioneer, published at Missoula, Montana, appeared on the 9th of December on a half sheet of brown wrapping paper. The enterprising editor stated that they had been having some pretty heavy snow-storms, which blockaded his supplies, and that he had used up all the wrapping paper in town. He takes a big oath that rather than suspend he will print the next issue on gunny sacks.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twenty cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ The papers or magazines in a club will be sent to different Post-offices, if desired.

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THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JAN. 20, 1872.

OUR NEXT NOVELET.

In our next paper we design commencing a new novelet, entitled

SEVEN GRAVES;

OR,

THE HEIRS OF DUNLEATH.

BY ESTHER SERLE KENNETH.

This is a picturesque and fascinating story, and will, we think, afford great pleasure to our readers.

FINE MANNERS IN WOMEN.

Is there any barrier against presumption, and against an attempt at equality, like thorough-bred courtesy? "Do what you will, you can never be so thorough a lady as I am," was the impression made upon me by the sweet humility, the plain dress, the almost forlorn surroundings of Mrs. Custis, the former mistress of Arlington. It was more what she did not do, the absence of effect, coupled with the desire to make you happy, the thorough breeding, the self-abnegation, the graceful dignity, that made this lady a duchess in her faded realm. Such breeding and such manners as hers are not within the reach of every one—they are partly natural gifts—but the virtues which lead to them are to be cultivated by everybody with some hope of success.

Miss Sedgwick was one of these wonderful well-bred women. No woman in America was more famous than she in her prime, and she had much of the grace with little of the formality of those "old school" manners in which she must have been trained. Flattery never turned her head; she was modest and humble as Madame de Sevigne. Her manner of introducing two persons has never been surpassed; she made them both feel honored and distinguished. Her attitude of listening was in itself a compliment, and to the very last she maintained a charm beyond beauty, the charm of perfect manners. —*Lippincott's Magazine.*

(From the New Era, Stevenson, Ala., Jan. 26, 1872.)

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, by H. Peterson & Co., Philadelphia, has been the great family newspaper for half a century. As it grows older it likewise grows richer and better. It has now 48 long columns.

(From the Editor of The Citizen, West Point, Miss., Dec. 16th, 1871.)

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST was the first paper for which we ever subscribed. It was the best then (1834), and it is better now. You cannot get a better paper.

WINTER IN THE COUNTRY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARIE S. LADD.

The sun in dreary splendor
Is lingering in the West,
A weary weight of ice and snow
Is on the water's breast.

The daisies and the buttercups
Are in their frozen bed,
All cheerless in the meadow,
With sheets of white o'erspread.

Long lines of loaf-like snow banks—
Long lines of leafless trees
Stretch out along the roadside,
Where all things seem to freeze.

The woodman's axe clear ringing;
The crackling of the frost;
The cold air keenly stinging;
The leaves with pearls embossed—

Remind us that a tyrant
Has gained a regal throne;
His touch, like death, is chilling,
His heart is like a stone.

But 'round the fireside gathered,
Our homelike joys complete,
We heed not wintry hours,
Or count them all too fleet.

Margaret Raynor.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BELLE BREMER.

"Shall we ever see you again, Royce?"

And the young girl lifted her violet eyes, misty with unshed tears, to those of her companion, a gentleman who stood leaning carelessly against one of the pillars of the portico. They made a pretty picture standing there in the white moonlight, among the June roses that were filling the air with their delicious fragrance.

"Of course," the young man answered.

"When the roses bloom again,
You will see me home returning:

"But if I did not return, Margaret, my pearl, should you care much?"

"Care?" she said. "Oh, Royce!" and he was answered. Suddenly inclining his handsome head to the pure Madonna-like face he pressed a kiss on the tempting lips so near his own, which brought the roses back to the pale cheeks—making her lovelier than ever—for she loved Royce Ellington with all the fervor of her young heart, with a love that would endure while life lasted. And when he told her that he was going away, she knew that with him would go all the brightness of her life.

And what of him? He had been her constant attendant at all parties and places of amusement, during the six months they had been acquainted. Had made love to her, called her his "Rare pale Margaret," his pearl, his queen, but said never a word of marriage. His was a cautious nature, and he did not wish to fetter himself with an engagement. His feelings were in the habit of changing, and though he loved Margaret after a fashion, it would be very inconvenient should a prettier face than Margaret's cross his path to have an engagement on his hand. Besides he was not going to give up his bachelor freedom yet a while, for any woman. He was one of those men who love variety, who are always falling in love with new faces. Butterflies who gather sweets from every flower.

Such was the character of the man to whom Margaret had given the wealth of her affection, a dower of which a king might have been proud; but which Royce Ellington esteemed so lightly. But she knew nothing of this, and when he drew her to him murmuring fond words of endearment in that wonderful voice whose very tone was a caress, she was perfectly happy for the time. True, he said nothing of marriage, but of that she did not think. He loved her and that was enough.

A little longer they stood by the vine-covered porch, and then Royce said he must go. Plucking a rose, he fastened it in the brown braids that lay against his breast; another caress and he was gone. The fair girl gazed after him till he was lost to view among the shadows, then slowly went into the house and up to her room, where she took the rose from her hair, kissed it and laid it reverently away.

For a time she was happy, and went singing about her work as blithely as the birds in the old apple tree that grew by her father's mill. Ah! sing while you may, it is spring time with you now, but the winter is coming when the singing birds in your heart will be hushed forever. Months came and went, and still letters came regularly. But by-and-by they grew like angels' visits, few and far between, and finally ceased entirely. Then Margaret drooped and faded. She had never been very robust, and nothing was thought of it; but the seeds of death were in her delicate frame, and needed only a little nourishment to do their fatal work. Her friends became alarmed at last, and did all that love and affection could do, but in vain. The hectic flush on the cheek told the sad story.

It was June again, and Margaret Raynor was dying; instead of the lover she had waited for, the Angel of Death was waiting to claim her as his own. The prayers of friends, the skill of kind physicians, availed nothing against the destroyer. And now she was treading the dark valley. "Mamma," she said, after lying still and silent for so long a time that they almost thought the gentle spirit had taken its flight, "Mamma, I shall never see another sun set; raise me up that I may take a long farewell. Ere he rises again, 'I shall be where haunting trouble comes not, nor humiliating fear alarms.' Mamma, are those my roses that smell so sweetly? No, do not bring them to me, they speak of life and love, and I have almost done with both. Rather bring me rosemary, 'The funeral flower, that loves to dwell with the pale corse in silent tomb.' Mamma, will you bring me my Bible?"

"Certainly, darling," said the weeping mother; "here it is!"

With trembling fingers, the dying girl took it, opened it, and took from its leaves a withered rose—the rose that Royce Ellington had given her the year before. "Poor faded flower, thou art withered and dead, like the love of the giver. Ah! Royce, Royce, it is a faithful heart thou hast broken—faithful unto death! I am tired, mamma, let me rest awhile."

Very tenderly the mother laid her back among the pillows; and the weary eyelids closed over the blue eyes, never to be raised again. So very gently did the angel of death touch her, that the watchers thought she slept, until after a time the mother bending over her, found only the beautiful casket. The jewel was gone. Very lovely she looked as she lay like a broken lily, with the withered rose on her breast. Surely—if her faithless lover could have seen her at that moment, he would have repented his perfidity in sackcloth and ashes.

Ah, there are many Royce Ellingtons in the world!

"Sweetly sleeps she, pain and passion torn no longer on her brow—
Weary watchers ye may leave her, she no more will need you now."

☞ A venerable goose, supposed to be over 70 years old, still lives at Dover, Mo., according to the Lexington Caucasian.

☞ Nebraska has an editor so lazy that he spells wife, yf.

☞ A "Society of Neglected Wives" is being organized at Trenton.

GOSSIP FOR LADIES.

THE CITY FASHIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST—A dreadful time in the year this is to attempt to say anything new on the subject of fashions. Winter styles are established and have been described, and there is no call for further remarks.

At present nobody thinks of anything but ball and party dresses, and these are all made so much on the same plan, that there is very little to say. But for all that, they look pretty in their vapory lightness, their puffs, and flounces, and trailing sprays of evergreen and rrees, and all the other little concomitants that go to make up the general effect.

The saying that "Worth makes the woman—the want of him, the dowdy," is not as true as the original proverb to which Pope gave utterance, for some of the very prettiest and most admired of our evening outfits are made at home by the fairy fingers of the graceful wearers themselves, or fashioned by some tasteful modiste, who works on in obscurity at unremunerative wages, quite unaware of the fortune that lies in the tips of her skillful fingers, and entirely ignorant of the fact that in point of judgment and good taste, she is miles in advance of the eccentric Englishman over whom all fashionables have been going crazy for the last few years, and whose chief ability seems to lie in the bunching and wrinkling up of rich materials into inextricable confusion. Musically speaking, his dresses are one grand discord—though for that matter, take all our fashions as they stand to-day, and they will never

"Make Heaven drowsy with their harmony."

The fashion of short skirts in the ball-room was an exceedingly convenient and economical idea, and an elegant dress of silk, *crepe* lace and *tulle* could then be insured for two or three evenings at no very exorbitant premium, and without coming under the head of "extra hazardous."

But it was not a graceful style, in fact there was no "style" about it—and ladies, one and all, looked like so many peasants; in time they found this out and exclaimed against it. It was too bad, to sacrifice grace and beauty on the altar of economy, and they would not do it. So after one or two seasons the train—baggage and express car, four passenger and sixteen sleeping coaches, I should judge from the length of it—came in again.

It was worse than though they had never been abandoned, for previous to their disappearance the gentlemen—awkward brutes, bless them!—had been schooled and scolded into being a little careful where they set their feet down, and had learned their lesson just well enough to be perpetually on their guard and in constant misery through fear of some grand *faux pas*.

It was a clear case of "cruelty to animals." They were expected to squander their money and time on these social festivities, but they were not permitted to take any part in the enjoyment, but at last a friendly Bergh in the form of fashion came to the rescue.

And how those liberated masculines did rejoice! There was a universal thanksgiving and a general lifting up of sad hearts as the last diaphonous bit of trailing drapery disappeared.

Dancing was some amusement, they said, now that you were not forever losing yourself in a cloud of ruffles and dry goods, and tangling your feet at the imminent risk of your neck.

They had lived to see the last of long skirts they thought, and were morally certain their last—"beg pardon, ma'am!" had been uttered.

But alas! for human expectations. Just as they had got in the way of putting down their feet "promiscus," and moving about in the free and independent manner incident to manhood, the ladies awakened from their whilom trance and whisked about more in the way than ever. It was unexpected, and gentlemen are not apt scholars, and the way they do put their "patent-leathers" through lace and tarletan this season is terrible to behold.

Even the Grand Duke, who is supposed to be grace personified, had a hand, or foot rather, in the general mutilation of costly dresses at every ball he attended. He said he didn't mean to, and said it very prettily in French, and that, or the "divinity that doth hedge a king," one or the other, saved the royal visitor from the savage glances that are usually bestowed, gratis, on the poor unfortunate who is so unlucky as to "rend and tear the clothes" of the pretty creature who has honored him with her hand for a "German."

But I set out to talk about the present fashion of ball dresses, and to give a few hints as to how the prettiest are made, and here I am near foundering in a sea of gossip entirely foreign to the subject.

Tarletan is considered the most beautiful and effective of all materials for evening dresses. It is perishable, but there is such an airy grace about it, such a cloud-like appearance, that its frailty is overlooked. White tarletan converts an ordinary belle into an angel, I have heard it said; and perhaps it does, but to think so, it appears to me one must have a singular idea of the dress of angels. Raphael pictured them in long white robes that had neither beginning nor end to them, but floated around miscellaneously as it were, and finally mingled with the cloudy billows that surrounded them. The material might have been tarletan for all I know, but the general make-up was not in the present style by any means.

One of the most admired of tarletan dresses that has yet made its appearance had trained lower skirt—very much trained—with plaited flounce much deeper in the back than in front. Two flounces were added to the steep one, in front only; the second one continued around the skirt at the head of the deep flounce, and was twisted to resemble lilies. It did not make first-rate lilies. I doubt any one's knowing they were lilies, unless they were told; but it made a pretty and effective trimming, and that was the only thing required. The upper flounce terminated at the side, under a cluster of light blue ribbon, and a cluster of ribbons was placed in the centre of each lily. The overskirt was cut very long to admit of very ample draping. An elastic cord and loop of blue ribbon lifted the overskirt at the side. The bodice was low—extremely low. It was one of the *decolette-est* kind. The bottom of the waist was slightly pointed and finished with a plaiting in front: at the back the plaiting was wide and twisted into lilies the same as on the skirt; clusters of ribbon and plain tarletan pleating, with a narrow band of ribbon through the centre, finished the corsage. There were no sleeves to speak of, but a cluster of ribbon on either shoulder answered every purpose. Another dress was made in the same style, and flowers were substituted for the ribbon: the effect was quite as pleasing.

Sometimes these dresses are made with a single skirt, with flounce at the bottom, and graduated puffs extending to the waist. In whatever style they are made, it is always necessary to lighten and brighten them up with ribbons or flowers. White kid slippers are usually worn with them. The hair should by trimmed to correspond with the dress. If flowers are used on the dress, the hair should have a sprinkling of blossoms—if ribbons, *ribbons*.

OLIVE KING.

TELLING A STRAIGHT STORY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

It takes *me* to tell a straight story! If you've never heard *about the widder Pullin, and how she lost her false curls and a husband all to once*, jest hark here a minute, and I'll tell you the whole story; for, as I said before, it takes *me* to tell a story straight through without any embellishments.

I was brought up to it you see. When I was a girl, not too big to have my ears boxed, father would say, "Tell what you've got to tell, and be done with it!" And if I tried to go one inch to the right or to the left, down would come that big hand on the side of my head, and stop me short off.

There warn't never no harm in what I said—but then that's jest men's ways! They love to domineer better'n they like their dinner. And that's sayin' a good deal.

After I growed up, and had a young man to see me home from singin'-school, and set and eat apples of an evening—and sech apples as *we* used to have ain't to be found now-a-days. They were big and handsome, all in stripes, the most lovely red and yeller ever you seed.

But as I was a sayin', when Jabez got to comin' so often I'd sometimes get stuck for something to talk about. Like anybody else in such a perdicament, I'd sometimes say the same thing over again.

As sure's I did, Jabez would say right out, "Whistle it, Rusha!"

That's always been the matter with me. I never get started to do something, but what somebody stops me. I didn't mind it so much in Jabez, because I had a sort of hankerin' after him; and that brings me right to my story.

As I was a sayin', the widder was so unhappy as to lose her ten-dollar curls and a husband (in perspectiv') all to once!

What? I've come to the end of the space allotted me? *Of course!* I might have known I should be stopped before I'd begun! But there's *one* consolation, nobody can say it's *my* fault!

JERUSHA.

HOW I KEPT Christmas Among the Asiatics.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MRS. FANNIE R. FEUDGE.

Later, we all met at the palace, which was in such a blaze of light, from moat to turrets, as to be visible for miles down the river. Prince Chan Fa received his guests with a graceful courtesy that could not be surpassed by the most polished European courtier. He wore on the occasion a dark-blue, full-naval dress uniform, with epaulettes and buttons of pure gold—a dress peculiarly suited to his erect figure, and compact, strongly-built form. He sat at the head of his table, with an American lady at his side; and one of the resident missionaries, who occupied the other end, said grace in the English language.

The room was brilliantly illuminated with wax candles, and the table fairly aglow with the sheen of massive gold and silver plate, and the glitter of costly glass. The first course consisted of four varieties of soup—oyster, mock turtle, birds'-nest, and real Oriental chowdah, such as no one ever imbibes this side the Cape of Good Hope. Next came fish—rock, halibut, sea trout, and others for which there are no names in our language. As these were removed, sundry other courses followed, consisting of poultry, mutton, hams, pigs roast and barbecued, fricassees, meat pies, patties, and ragouts, cutlets *en papillotte*, and scores of other dishes, till the board seemed fairly to groan beneath the luxuries outspread upon its ample dimensions; and last of all, came the inevitable concomitant of Oriental dinners, rice, with curries of prawn, rabbit, and vegetables. The first cloth being removed, a genuine English plum-pudding, with cockney sauce, was brought on, with mince and various fruit pies, followed by the sumptuous dessert I have already described—conspicuous among which towered the exquisitely adorned pyramids of cake and crystalized fruits, rearing their stately height almost to the dazzling chandeliers above. After the removal of the last cloth, there were probably forty varieties of *fresh* fruits set on, many of them peeled and adorned with wreaths of pure white blossoms; while the wines, champagne, hock, burgundy, and sherry were old and mellow. With some rare, old Amontillado, brought on at the last, some few healths were proposed, among them the King of Siam, President of the United States, Queen of England, and our noble Prince himself—the last with an enthusiasm that must have been very gratifying. Everything went off well, and I never attended a more genial and enjoyable Christmas feast.

After dinner we had fireworks in great variety—sky-rockets, fire-wheels, flying-fish, and Roman candles, the finest I have ever seen, lighting up the very heavens with brilliancy; and best of all, we could watch the erratic movements of these fire-belching monsters from the long, low windows of the drawing-rooms, opening upon a grassy lawn, without the trouble of leaving our luxuriant divans and *fauteuils*—quite a desideratum after dinner, at least in that sultry clime, so promotive of langnor and inertia. The Prince next summoned his bands, and we were regaled with music, both vocal and instrumental, some of it very good, especially the Laos organ, accompanied by several splendid sopranos, and one of the finest alto voices I ever heard. Then there were bands of dancing girls called in—young, graceful creatures, beautiful as houris, with pliant forms of exquisite symmetry, and every movement so full of voluptuous grace as utterly to captivate a genuine votary of Terpsichore. But these were only *slave* girls, kept for the entertainment of their royal master, since the indolent and exclusive Eastern nabob is never guilty of the absurdity of *dancing for himself*—his taste for the dance being gratified *à la Orientale*, by having it performed for him by others, while he reclines at ease on cushions of velvet, sipping cool sherbert or watching the wreaths of smoke that rise from his fragrant cigarette. More philosophical certainly within the Tropics, with the thermometer standing at 102 deg. in the shade, than for one not obliged to do so to go through the countless evolutions of *la danse Orientale*. We next had a specimen of the Siamese Drama—rather amusing, but possessing no great merit, the chief attraction consisting in the magnificent costumes of the actors, who were decked in regal robes of the costliest description, and *real* jewels of fabulous value—of course belonging to the Prince, their master. Some other amusements followed, and the entertainment closed with a trial of strength in single combat between two youthful knights, relatives I think of Prince Chan Fa, whom he was training for the army, to be put on his own staff. They were both of noble presence, and apparently very evenly matched, so that nearly an hour must have elapsed before any advantage was gained on either side; and at last the victory was decided by an accident, the breaking of the sword of one of the combatants; an advantage of which the other dexterously availed himself, though he generously threw away his own weapon before bearing down upon his adversary. His victory, however, was complete, and a jewelled sword of great value was his reward, presented by the Prince in *propria persona*. The youthful aspirant bowed low before his royal patron, and uttered a few words of thanks; then turned to his rival, and with a courteous "Never mind, you may be the victor next time," they left the apartment together, apparently as good friends as ever. It was now past midnight. So bidding our noble host an affectionate adieu, we retired as we came, in the state barges of the Prince; and thus ended our very pleasant Christmas at this grand Oriental palace.

AN OREGON LAY.

Among them that came up to speckilate in stock and supplies,
Was a fellow named Stewart, a man of enterprize;
He bought him a switch-tailed sorrel, two years old, which had a white face,
And he challenged any man in Portland, O. T., to run him a thousand-dollar race.

Thar was a man had a horse, which he thought her pretty fair,
She was generally knowed as Millard's thousand-dollar mare;
He hadn't any idee, he said, of doing anything so rash,
But he took up Mister Stewart for two hundred dollars cash.

So every soul in Portland, O. T., went straight down to the course,
And every cent we borrowed we bet on Millard's horse;
And thar was that speckilating Stewart with hand upon his hip,
And two men a-following with a tin-pail full of dollars and a champagne basket full of scrip!

Well, they measured off the ground, and the horses got a start,
And came running down right pretty, about four feet apart;
And the Millard mare had it all her own way, as everybody said,
Till just as they got to the end of the track, that ar sorrel shot suthin' like ten feet ahead!

After we seen that, thar rix a most surprising din,
And remarks like this 'ere followed: "Dog my ever-lastin' skin,"
"I'll be dog-derned, and dog-goned, ding-blamed by Pike;"
And thar was such a awful howling, and swearing, and dancing, that many old people said they had never seen the like.

And that 'ar speckilatin' Stewart, he made matters worse;
He packed the money in a hand-cart, and didn't care a curse;
And sweetly smiling, pulled it off, as though he didn't mind the heft;
And since then we hain't paid no taxes nor bought nothing, nor sold nothing, for I suppose that in all Portland, O. T., there ain't a single red cent left.

VERY ILL MANNERS INDEED.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

What a queer sort of people they are, who will praise and flatter and soft soap a lady when they want a favor, and after they get it, never say as much as "Thank ye."

Not long ago one of 'em—a poet whose name is well-known in the literary world—wrote me a most polite note, saying he had become *such* an admirer of my *exquisite* poems, that he *really*—although a total stranger to me—felt constrained to ask me if I would be *so* kind, and *so* obliging as to favor him with a poem for a little local journal in which he was interested, and he would be *much* pleased if I would have it in the same happy strain of my last *gem*, which appeared in a certain periodical to which we both contributed.

Well! the note was very polite, and coming from the source it did, I thought it rather complimentary. I receive a great many requests of the same nature during a year, and as it costs little to be obliging, I always endeavor to grant them. When this letter came, I had just completed a poem "in the same happy vein" of which he made mention, and although I had written it with an expectation of receiving money pay for it, from an Eastern publication, I immediately decided to send it to my complimentary friend. I sent it, with a little note, thanking him for his words of praise, which are always pleasant to an author, and hoping he would like the poem, &c. Well! four or five weeks went by, and I heard nothing more from him, and then I received a little yellow paper, some six or eight inches square, with my poem tucked away in an obscure corner, and one of my kind friend's upon the first page. And that was the last of him. Not a word of thanks: not a word to tell me if the article was acceptable. He might, at least, have said in a corner of the paper, "E. W., accept our thanks," or something of the kind. It would have shown that he had good manners, which he proves he has *not*, by making use of the poem and never saying "Boo!" for it. (Pardon that nursery expression.) Why even Lo, the poor Indian, when he has begged for a loaf of bread, or a piece of ham, knows enough to give a pleased grunt, which is *Injun* for "thank you." And my Sir Poet, who has enjoyed all the advantages of a civilized education, proves himself less polite than an unlettered savage.

I am always glad to oblige people when I can. I devote hours to writing articles for school girls, or upon given subjects at the request of friends and strangers, and I do it cheerfully and gladly, although I might at the same time be employed more profitably in a financial point of view. But there is something besides money worth living for in this world, and when I can accommodate or please a friend by anything I write, I am glad to do so; and consider their thanks good pay. But when I throw away time, a good poem, and a postage stamp (!) upon an ill-mannered stranger, who don't even grunt like Lo in return for the favor, it almost makes me declare that I will burn all such letters in the future, and try and please or accommodate nobody but myself; which would be a very foolish thing to do, I concluded on mature thought, and decided it would be a better way to send a "piece of my mind" to the Post, hoping my ill-mannered friend might see it, as I presume he will.

And *then* I guess he'll be sorry that he treated me so discourteously.

IMMEDIATELY after the declaration of war against Prussia, proposals were made to the Emperor Napoleon by an inventor for "annihilating" the Prussians on moderate terms. An immense net of fine wire, "capable of enveloping an entire army corps," with solid cannon-balls attached to the corners to keep it steady, was to have been fired at the foe from a monster mortar provided for that purpose. The wire net would, according to the intentions of the inventor, have fallen on the body of troops marked out for destruction or capture; when, seeing the enemy entangled in the meshes, the French would have nothing to do but march up to them and disarm them, or in case of resistance, put them to death. The rejection of this new military machine was attributed, by the inventor, to "treachery" on the part of the chiefs who declined to employ it.

☞ Dr. Guthrie, in a recent address, told a very suggestive story to this effect: A friend of his, questioning a little boy, said, "When your father and mother forsake you, Johnny, do you know who will take you up?" "Yes, sir," said he. "And who?" said the friend. "The police," was Johnny's answer.

DOING THINGS BY HALVES.

BY CALEB BURT.

Those who travel much have an excellent opportunity to observe human nature, to study various classes of people, and often meet with some very curious specimens of humanity.

One summer I took an extended tour on horseback through New England; when nearing the pleasant little village of W—— I discovered that my horse had cast a shoe, so I dismounted and walked along by the side of my horse in order not to give him any unnecessary injury.

I soon arrived at a blacksmith's, and requested the brawny son of the anvil to make my animal fit for travel again, as I wished to reach a neighboring village before night.

"You can't belong to these parts, I should judge," said the smith, stirring up his fire.

"No, I don't," said I shortly, as I did not care to enter into a conversation with a gossip, as the man evidently was.

"Because I noticed you didn't nod to Sim Simonson yander; Sim's a queer cove is Sim, always adoin' things by halves is Sim, always adoin' things by halves."

"Indeed!" I said, showing signs of impatience.

"Yes. Why, when he was born he warn't half as big as his brothers, and some folks goes so fur's to say that he's only half-witted, but I'll back Sim two to one agin any on 'em."

"Is it possible?" I replied, for I saw the man expected me to say something.

"Dreffful shiftless Sim is, too, though I don't s'pose he kin help it; he was born so, and lived so, and will eventually die so, I expect."

"Ah!"

"Yes, one time when he was a youngster we were all a playing football out on the green back of the school-house yander. Ye can't see it from here, but there is a little pond side of it, what supplies the water for the mill just under the hill there. Well, as I was sayin' it was a nice, warm pleasant day in the fall, and we was playing football. Sim was a great hand to play, but was always clumsy at it; always getting the most kicks, or gettin' hurt at base-ball or cricket."

"Yes, well, go on," said I, getting a little interested.

"The land slopes a little towards the pond in one place, and sometimes we used to kick the ball into the water.

"Well, it happened so this day; Sim tried to stop it, for it was considerable trouble to fish it out sometimes. Will Parker swam in after it once. Sim and a lot of 'em were squabbling for the ball, when Sim, making a grab for it, missed his holt and fell in; but mind ye, the best o' it was he only fell in half-way!"

"Indeed, how was that?"

"Why, the water weren't deep, and he only fell in half-way, wot one leg, arm and one side of him, while the other side was dry as a chip. By gravy, how the fellows laughed to see him. Then one time in chemistry an experiment he was trying didn't work well, and some gas he was making, he was always making horrid smells and loud noises was Sim in his chemical researches, as he called 'em: well this ere gas exploded, and burnt his hair off, but would you believe it, it only burnt the hair on one side of his face, singed one lip, one cheek and one eyelash and eyebrow, and the hair on one side of his head, true to his usual habit of doin' things by halves."

"Indeed, that was remarkable."

"So it was, but none the less true. Why, bless you, half the time he only half learnt his lessons, and he used to go about only half dressed, nothin' on but his shirt and pants, and in later days he used to be very partial to the Half Way House yander, but he always took his grog half water, and never got wholly drunk in his life, always half drunk."

"Indeed, I didn't know there was a difference in the stages of intoxication."

"Well, there was with Sim, when he was courtin' Sal Perkins, Sal Tompkins she is now. She lives in that red house over there in the meddar. He still did things by halves. Sent her presents by express and made her pay the charges on 'em. Sent her love-letters. She had to pay the postage on 'em all. Took her to the show, but she had to pay for herself, and all such things; till one day Jim Tompkins come along, gave her a handsome ring and a hundred dollars, and asked her to be his'n, and they married the next month; but Sim didn't seem to mind it much."

"Oh! Well, I don't see how he should."

"No, nor I, but there he is over yander, that fellow with a wooden leg, and his right sleeve empty: you see he went to the war, did Sim, and lost half of his right leg and his right arm. Still sticking to the half-way business, you see; didn't do the square thing and get killed right out, but must do it half-way as usual. Queer feller is Sim, a queer feller."

"Yes, he appears to be; just give him this for me. When you see him, tell him to drink my health with it."

"Half a dollar; that 'll just suit Sim—if you gave him a dollar he'd want it in halves. There's your horse, sir, all ready, sir; thankee, sir, your generosity is only excelled by your good looks; good-day, sir. Oh, what might be your name, sir?"

"It might be George Washington, Napoleon Bonaparte, Andrew Jackson, or Julius Cæsar, but it isn't," said I, springing into the saddle, and, putting spurs to my horse, I rode rapidly away, much to the astonishment of the smith, who would have pumped out my whole personal history if I had stayed half an hour longer, which I was not disposed to do: so I merely shouted out behind me my name, residence, and place of business, which seemed to satisfy him, for he went into his shop again, and I saw him no more.

THE Emperor of China is soon to be married, and has imported a pair of elephants to assist at the ceremony. His future consort is undergoing a careful training in the etiquette of court life. For three years the looms of Nankin, Hongchou, and Canton have been engaged on the silks and satins for her bridal trousseau, and just now they are announced as completed, at a cost of nearly half a million in our money. When the bridegroom, who has the sun for his emblem, goes forth in a car drawn by elephants, his bride, who represents the moon, is to be borne to her palace in a palanquin composed entirely of strings of pearls.

☞ "Remember who you are talking to, sir!" said an indignant parent to a fractious boy. "I'm your father, sir!" "Well, who's to blame for that?" said young impertinence: "'taint me!"

☞ Among the women arrested for shoplifting during the holiday season, were the wife of a Boston police-officer and the wife of a Troy clergyman.

☞ Some wretch of an editor says that another twist of the ladies' hair would take them off their feet.

☞ Horace Greeley wrote: "Women now manage most of the public libraries in Massachusetts," and the compositor read it: "Women now worry most of their public babies by mastication."

☞ Bridgeport, Michigan, is to hold an election to decide who are the handsomest woman and the most popular man in the village.

☞ Moving for a new trial—popping to Mrs. No. 2.

THE BROOK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY KATHERINE KINGSTON FILER.

Hushed into silence 'neath the shade of the beeches,
Laughing where sunshine glints down through each tree,
The brook lightly wimples
With foam-cradling dimples,
As it glides on its hurrying way to the sea.

Through beds of lilies so daintily regal
With musical singing it tinklingly plashes,
'Twixt butter-cupped edges,
'Tween reed-sighing sedges,
In cascades of crystal it foams and it flashes.

Lilies of gold rock to sleep on its surface,
Over it waves the bright bloom of the mallow,
And song-birds are flinging
Their maddening singing
From alder boughs mirrored in pools still and shallow.

Away through the heart of the flower-flecked meadow
In sciutillant sparkles it glides to the ocean,
Where sailors' songs rise
On the mist of the skies,
And the sea-gulls are ever and ever in motion.

Sweet are the melodies trilled from its waters,
Songs of the sea that it hastens to reach,
Of ships that, at rest,
Rock to dreams on its breast,
Of the children that play on the shell-sighing beach.

White feet oft have bathed in its silvery waters,
Wee fingers with willows light waves did engender,
Fair faces have dipt
In the tide, limpid-lipp'd,
That kissed them with kisses all quiveringly tender.

O feet! that have passed from the green of the meadow
To dust-trodden paths where life's work has begun;
O hearts! filled with sadness—
O lives! fraught with gladness—
Whose mirth or whose weariment nearly is done—

Are brook-waves forgotten in rush of Life's river?
Is olden delight merged in greater delight?
Do laughter and song
Bear your spirits along
As the brook bore your kisses in days old and bright?

Gnarled oak-trees upreared on the opposite bank,
Lean over the water and gracefully sway,
And gossamer lace
Is touching the face
Of the beryl-waved brook that is flashing away.

Ye brook-waves so rhythmical, musical, flowing
As strains from Pan's pipes in the forests of Eld,
Accept my glad song,
Since in Summer days long
Ye taught me to sing all my happy heart held.

SLEEPY HOLLOW.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY PRESLEY W. MORRIS.

CHAPTER I.

"Roy!"

The clatter of the horse's hoofs on the hard road stopped, and the young man turned his head toward the place from which the voice had proceeded.

There she was, Garnet Raymond, standing by the avenue gate; a girl with a most bewitching face, and a wealth of golden hair floating loose behind. Royal Farnsworth's heart beat a quicker motion as he beheld her. He reined in his horse with one hand, and touching his hat with the other, bowed low to her.

"Roy," the girl continued, "we are going to have a game of croquet on the avenue this afternoon; will you come over?"

He had rode his horse up close to her.

"I will only be too happy," he responded.

"Three o'clock is the hour," she added; "don't forget it."

"You may be sure I will not," Royal answered.

As if he could forget that which would throw him for a few hours into Garneta Raymond's presence! Why the mere thought of it would thrill him with delight all the day.

A few more words were interchanged and then he left her. A half a dozen times as he rode slowly down the road, he turned his head. Garnet was walking slowly up the avenue, and a glimpse even of her graceful figure was pleasure to him.

His side of the story can be told in three words: He loved her.

And she knew that he loved her. Not that he had ever spoken the words, but a thousand actions had told her so. Indeed she could scarcely remember when he had not been her lover. In their childhood even, he had, in winter, pulled her to school on his sled; in the summer, he had gathered her the sweetest of wild flowers, and carried her the most lucious of fruits. She had never had a rival; Royal Farnsworth had never seemed to care to look at another girl even. And when they had both crossed the line between childhood, and manhood and womanhood, it was still the same.

Presently Garnet disappeared in her home, and Royal let Gypsy, his pony, break into a canter once more. He was not long in reaching his own home, and dismounting he threw the gray pony's rein to a colored boy, and walked up the path to the house—a rambling but pleasant and convenient building. He went around to the kitchen door, and standing in it for a moment, said:

"Marm Winnie, can you have dinner at half past one?"

"Bress you heart, ob course I can, ef you wants it, Mar's Roy," answered Marm Winnie, a genial old black woman, whose chief pride and delight was "Mar's Roy."

"Well, I shall be very much pleased to have it so, Marm Winnie," Roy answered.

He turned away from the door, and entering at another, proceeded down the hall to the library. The library was an old-fashioned room, yet cosily furnished, and with many valuable books on its shelves.

Roy threw himself into a seat, and rested his face in his hands. Then before his eyes floated a sweet vision, with slender form, and blue eyes, and delicately tinged cheeks, and lips crimson as scarlet berries.

"Oh, Garnet Raymond, I love you," he murmured softly, "my queen! my darling!"

The man's voice was full of tenderness; his eyes shone with what was in his heart—love. "I must tell her that I love her," was his next thought. "I cannot, I will not delay longer."

Then he lifted his face from his hands. It was very white—white with a sudden thought that had anguished him. If she should not love him!

"But she must," he uttered as if in answer to himself; "if she does not it will kill me."

His eyes fell on a picture on the wall—not but that there were many of them—but on one that seemed to stand by itself. It was the picture of his brother Ulric. Of course beholding the picture made him think of *his* brother. He shivered slightly as he did so. Garnet Raymond present with him one moment, and Ulric Farnsworth next. The change that was forced in his thoughts wasn't pleasant by any means. Yet the face that looked down on him was a strikingly handsome one—a darkly-splendid looking face.

Royal rose and began to pace back and forth. "Was it ominous," he asked himself, "that thoughts of Ulric had come in to crowd away those of Garnet Raymond?"

And bitter memories came to Royal Farnsworth in connection with his brother. He was not dead—no, not dead. On the opposite wall hung the portraits of Royal's parents. They *were* dead, but only peaceful thoughts came to him when he thought of them. He could not thus think of this wandering brother of his.

The story was a terribly bitter, but not a strange one. Only the story of a dissipated and reckless life. Ulric was five years his senior, and had graduated at college just as Royal entered. Royal did not know even then that Ulric had entered upon and was travelling a sinful course. He found it out very shortly, however. The old folks at home discovered it too, and the sins of their only other child besides Royal, hastened them toward the grave. At last Ulric, in the very city in which Royal was attending college, got into a drunken fight, and the blood of one of his fellow beings was caused to flow by his hands.

Ulric was arrested. For a long time the man whom he had wounded lay at the point of death. It was a terrible time, this in which it seemed that the charge of murder would lay at the door of the Farnsworths.

The man recovered at last, and Ulric at some cost was freed. But the stroke had been too much for the aged father and mother, and a few months later they dropped quietly into the grave.

That ought to have stopped Ulric Farnsworth in his course. But it didn't, and his life of dissipation continued.

The will that was left behind took nothing from him. John Farnsworth had been a rich man. Half of his property he left to Ulric. There was only one stipulation; Royal was to have the old homestead and the half dozen slaves that went with it. There was more than enough property to balance this.

This suited Ulric. He converted his property into ready cash. Then for a few months he had spent his time partly with Royal, and partly in the adjacent city.

But he was an unbearable tyrant. His temper was ungovernable, and there was no enduring him. It went so far at last that Royal forced him away from the old home. Royal was not to blame; one or the other had to go; the younger brother bore on his person some scars received at the hands of the elder; received without a blow in return, when he, young athlete that he was, could have shaken Ulric Farnsworth, dissipated wreck that *he* was, fairly to pieces. But that sort of thing wasn't to be endured forever, and so Royal had taken the only course open to him—a course that left him alone so far as kin was concerned. Well, it had been three years since Ulric had been banished. Two years later he had come back. It was money that he wanted. He had spent his fortune in so short a space.

And money he received—a considerable portion. But on the condition that he would never again set foot within Royal Farnsworth's door; to that Royal added that he would be gladly welcomed when he could make it apparent that there was an entire change in himself.

CHAPTER II.

Two o'clock found Royal sauntering along the road toward the residence of Mr. Raymond, Garnet's father. He knew that he would be early, but then he wanted to talk awhile to Garnet.

Proceeding up the avenue, he found the girl that he loved seated alone on the piazza. His blood coursed rapidly through his veins. He wanted to tell her of what was within him; why not now as well as any time?

"You are more than prompt," Garnet said with a smile, as she gave him a seat beside her. "No one else here yet."

"Who is coming?" he asked. Of course anything that was farthest from his heart would be easiest spoken then.

"Oh, half a dozen, or more, of them," Garnet replied. "The two girls from the parsonage; Miss Duncan; Ralph Dinsmore and his brother; Mr. Marshall; I believe that's all."

The girl caught at a clambering vine and pulled a blossom from it. Letting her hand fall beside her it touched Royal's. That touch made him start; it seemed to remind him suddenly of what he wanted to say.

But the words appeared to catch in his throat, and he could not utter them. Thinking of what he wanted to say, his manner was embarrassed and abstracted.

"Why, Roy, what's the matter?" Garnet asked at length, noticing that he was ill at ease. "Are you—"

A sudden courage fired his blood. He seized her hand, and interrupted her with:

"Shall I tell you what is the matter with me? Garnet, Garnet, I love you!"

The girl blushed, and a soft light came into her eyes. She had thought as much, but it was pleasant to hear it.

"Garnet, will you be my wife?" he added, a great deal of the strength of his love in his voice. Probably there is no woman but that has something of the coquette in her nature. At any rate, sweet Garnet Raymond possessed a little of it. She was sure of this man's love, was it anything more than natural that she should trifle with it a little.

"Why, Roy, you're so sudden," she cried, with a graceful gesture of astonishment. "Why you don't want me to be anything more than a sister to you, do you?"

His grasp on her hand tightened. "More than that, Garnet, or nothing," he said passionately. "Yes or no, to my question."

"I won't answer till I have considered the matter," Garnet broke out with a pretty show of anger.

Looking into his eyes she saw so much fear and pain there—the pain caused by the fear—that she was touched.

"Be patient with me, Roy," she said softly. "My lifetime's happiness depends upon my answer; let me study my own heart awhile before I give it. You know I have always been such a child with you."

"Forgive my impatience, Garnet," he said, a quiver in his voice. "It is my great love that makes me so. I will grant you as much time as you want to consider the matter."

Neither of the two played croquet very successfully that afternoon. Garnet's playing was very bad; Royal's a miserable failure.

After the game was over, they all started up the avenue to the house, to have some music. They were half way up it, or more, when a horse came cantering along the road. His rider stopped him at the gate.

Royal knew in a moment who that rider was; a black boy from his own house.

"That's Elf," he said quietly; "no doubt he wants me. Perhaps something is wrong at the farm."

All the party paused to wait till the boy should come up. In a few moments he had reached them.

"Here's suffin' for you, Mars Royal," he ejaculated.

It was only a piece of white paper folded that he held in his hand. Royal reached out and took it. A paleness overspread his countenance as he opened it and read:

"ROYAL—I have sinned against you deeply, and yet once more I come to you for help. I have spent all that you gave me a year ago, most of it worldly and extravagantly. Yet lately I have beheld what a terribly wicked man I am. I have made and am trying to keep some resolutions for good. But, O Royal, without money I am lost. I am so miserably weak that I cannot successfully battle against the world and my sins at once. Unless you help me as I have indicated, I am irretrievably and forever lost to good. If you are willing to aid me, come immediately to Sleepy Hollow, and you will find me there. The vow that I made in return for your last kindness will not let me come within your door. ULRIC."

The great heart of Royal Farnsworth went out in pity toward his erring brother. These, the first words of repentance that Ulric had ever given forth, touched him deeply. Love toward his brother had not died within his heart.

"I must go," he said hurriedly as he finished reading the note.

And leaving half a dozen simultaneous questions unanswered, he hastened away. Mounting the horse that the colored boy had rode, he dashed rapidly toward his home. He went into the house, remained for a few moments and then came out again. Then he took a path through the orchard, keeping in it till he came to a meadow fence. Climbing that, he still hurried on for half a mile through half a dozen more fields. At last he reached the edge of the forest that stretched away back of the farm. A dim path was before him. He did not hesitate, but kept straight on in this. At last, yes at last, he reached his destination, and stood in Sleepy Hollow.

It was a weird, romantic place, strangely different from the rest of the forest. It was not the valley of a stream, but a round hollow, inclosed by four gently sloping banks. Its area was considerable. It was covered with rich verdure, and was not as gloomy as the remainder of the forest. A few giant trees shaded it; up most of these clambered stout vines. Certainly Sleepy Hollow would seem like the home of the fairies.

Royal Farnsworth did not see, as he stepped into Sleepy Hollow, any evidences of any other presence than his own. He lifted his voice and called:

"Ulric!"

But the call was heard. A figure stepped out from behind a vine-covered tree.

"Roy!" a voice said.

And the two brothers clasped hands.

CHAPTER III.

The whole country was wild with excitement. Royal Farnsworth was under arrest, charged with the murder of his brother.

The day after Royal had gone to Sleepy Hollow, some person chancing to ramble through it had discovered there a dead body. Of course the alarm was given. The face of the body was battered out of recognition. The figure answered to the description of Ulric Farnsworth's. In fact half a dozen or more men stood ready to swear that they believed the body to be that of Ulric. It came out—it could not be otherwise—that Royal had gone there to meet him. Then to whom did the finger of suspicion point but to Royal Farnsworth? Most any one could imagine how they had met; how they had quarreled; and then the fatal blow, repeated no doubt a dozen times, that had struck down the elder brother.

Royal was calm enough about it, (perhaps it was the calmness of despair.) The story that he told was plain and simple. He had met Ulric there, he did not deny that; a friendly conversation had followed, then he had left him, that was all there was of Royal's side of the story. He did not even choose to detail the conversation that had occurred.

A handkerchief had been picked up near the corpse with Royal's name upon it. However, that could scarcely add anything to the proof against him, he did not deny meeting his brother in Sleepy Hollow.

It is not necessary to dwell here. The long summer days passed away. The time of the trial came. The result of it shall be told briefly. Royal Farnsworth was acquitted. The verdict of the jury left him free to walk out of the court-house, and go to his home, or whither else he pleased. He scarcely understood himself why he had escaped. Certainly many a man had been hanged by circumstantial proof no stronger. The speech of the attorney who had prosecuted him was powerful and eloquent, and he had dwelt long and thrillingly on "that dreadful scene witnessed by no eyes, save those of Heaven; yet, owing to the tremendous weight of circumstantial evidence, this bloody crime was none the less firmly fixed on the prisoner at the bar."

It is hard to tell why the jury returned the verdict that it did. Perhaps the fact that no taint nor stain had fallen on the young man's individual life till this, was partly the reason. And then Ulric Farnsworth's character was fully proven, and something of what had occurred at the old home after it had become Royal's came out, so many thought that if Royal would have only spoken, he could have told that he had killed his brother in self-defense; perhaps something of this idea reached the jury. Probably the young man's prospect of life had turned on a very slender thread.

Juries are uncertain in such cases; another one might have returned an entirely opposite verdict. The plain truth is—I (that's a pronoun in the first person) do not believe in circumstantial evidence.

And Royal Farnsworth walked out of the court-house half wondering if he wasn't a criminal after all. He had escaped the vengeance of the law, but of all who knew him, how many believed him innocent of his brother's blood. He felt that they must be few. It was terrible, too, to realize this. There was nothing to free him from the stain, he felt: he must bear it forever. Perhaps it was wrong, but sometimes the thought that the gallows would have been merciful freedom compared with forever bearing the load that was upon him, came to him.

It was the second day after he had returned home from the trial, that he rose suddenly from where he was seated in the library. Marm Winnie was in the room, touching the top of a table with her duster—not that there was any dust there, but simply from habit.

"Marm Winnie," he cried, "I am going to Sleepy Hollow."

"Why, bress yer heart, Mars Royal, 'pears to me ye'd be 'feared to go; de ghos' ob—ob—"

A shudder completed the old woman's sentence.

"Ghosts never harmed any one, Marm Winnie," Royal said with a sad smile, as he went out; "the whim to go has seized me, and I am going to humor it. I'll be back to dinner."

He had been gone scarcely a quarter of an hour, when going to the front door to answer a knock, Marm Winnie found there—Garnet Raymond. "Is Royal here?" Garnet asked timidly. "Bress your sweet heart, Miss Garnet" Winnie said, "he is jis' dis few minutes gone to dat dreffal place, Sleepy Hollow."

Garnet grew pale. Latterly she could not hear that place mentioned without a shudder. Then her face flushed with sudden resolution.

"I am going after him," she said.

And she left Marm Winnie, not giving her time to utter an expostulation. The path to Sleepy Hollow was perfectly familiar to Garnet, for she had travelled it a hundred times at least.

Royal had reached it, and seated himself on the grassy bank. His face was moody. Is it strange that his thoughts were bitter? What had he done that all this agony should be heaped upon him? Such thoughts as that will come to the best of us sometimes, when misery falls upon us.

But the bitterest thought of all was of Garnet Raymond. The bright face of the girl came to him again as it had many times in the past months. She had never answered that question that he had asked her. The bars of a prison had shut her out from him, but then— Oh, could Garnet believe him guilty? The minutes passed, and he asked himself that question a dozen times.

"What matters it?" he said to himself at length; "virtually I am an outcast. Even if she loved me, I could not ask her to blight her life by uniting it with mine."

The lines about his mouth softened, and the bitterness departed from his face.

"*If she loved him!*" Oh, the unutterable sweetness of knowing that! To hear her say "I love you," would drive out of his life so much of its dreary pain.

Was he dreaming? "Roy, Roy!" sounded in his ears. He rose to his feet and looked about him. It was no dream, for there before him stood Garnet Raymond.

"Roy, dear Roy!" she cried again.

She had reached his side. He snatched her to him and strained her passionately to his breast.

"You would not come to me," she said presently when he had let her go, "so I have come to you to tell you that I will be your wife."

For a moment he had forgotten all his pains. Now he remembered.

"Dear Garnet," he uttered, "it can never be. I love you too well to permit it. Oh, Garnet, I am innocent, but the world don't believe that. I can't bear to humiliate you by bringing you down to my level."

It was like putting heaven away from him, but he seemed to have the strength to do it.

"Oh, Roy, I have suffered so much already," the girl cried tearfully. "I knew you were innocent; but oh! I feared so much."

A sudden thought occurred to her. "Did you get my letter?" she asked.

"I never received anything from you," he answered.

"I told you of my love in it. I—but it don't matter now."

Then she reached out her arms toward him. "Roy, I love you," she said; "that is all that I can say. It will kill me to drive me away from you."

He swayed towards her. A moment later he had her in his arms again, raining kisses upon her brow and cheek and lip.

She released herself from his embrace. "Come, Roy," she commenced. A cry escaped from both. There, before them, was a tall figure with dark eyes and handsome face.

"Ulric!" Royal exclaimed.

"Yes, Ulric," said the other. "Saved from his sins by a brother's forgiving love. You know the condition upon which I was to enter the old home. I am going with you now."

Then the strong man, Royal Farnsworth, broke down utterly, and tears flowed from his eyes as freely as from a child's.

* * * * * *

There was a long explanation. Ulric knew nothing of the danger Royal had been in on his account, till they informed him of it. A whim had taken him to Sleepy Hollow, and there he had beheld Royal and Garnet.

Royal's bounty given to him upon the evening of their meeting had saved him. He had gone away without a word as to whither. And he had been enabled to live up to his resolutions.

And a mystery still hangs about the man who was murdered in Sleepy Hollow. Nought in known either of him or the perpetrators of that crime. Probably the mystery will never be cleared away.

Garnet is mistress of Royal's home. Ulric spends a portion of his time there. His "good resolutions" were never broken, and to-day he is as happy a man as he could be expected to be.

Miss Rushton's Jealousy.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ESTHER SERLE KENNETH.

"The cashmere it does not matter so much about—but the purple silk I must have to wear to Madam's reception to-morrow night," said Ada Rushton, standing in her carriage dress, at the door of the little room where her seamstress worked.

"But, Miss Rushton—"

"Well?"

Ada paused.

"I am afraid I cannot possibly get it done. The overskirt is so elaborately trimmed."

Miss Rushton stared.

"You *must* get it done," she said, and sailed away.

Horatia Glenn sat down, her hands dropping listlessly on her lap, her eyes filling with tears. For a week every nerve in her body had been strained to the utmost, while she worked for Ada Rushton.

"Does she think I am made of iron, that I can go on forever like this?" she said to herself—but her lips did not move: they were held tight to keep from quivering. Horatia had decided long ago, that she could not afford time to cry in: she refrained from tears, from habit. But she looked at the table where lay the purple silk in glowing folds, with a glance that told a long story. "I must do the best I can."

She rose, approached the table, gathered up the silk, and measured off the sweeping skirt.

It had been a week since she had an half hour's rest—a week since she had inhaled a breath of out-door air—a week since she had known a moment free from that dreadful pain in her side. When the last stitch was put in Miss Rushton's white satin ball-dress, Horatia had believed that she had done all she could do until she had a change from the exhausting routine.

It was evident that Miss Rushton did not think so—or, rather, thought nothing about her.

Horatia Glenn was an English girl. She had not a friend in this whole wide country. Her father and mother had died—there was no home or place for her in London, and so she had taken somebody's advice and spent all the money she had to come to America. Fortunately or unfortunately she knew the art of dress-making, and had found a home with the Rushton, of Rushtonville. "The wealthiest family in the county—owned the town they lived in," her informant had said. Poor girl! the people who can afford to be generous are not usually the ones who are.

Ada Rushton was a beauty, because hearts and faces haven't very much to do with each other, though we may teach the children that they will be handsome if they are good. Miss Rushton's cheeks were like ripe peaches, her eyes were blue as sapphires, her features perfect, and the whole face was wreathed in by waves of golden hair, that, in bowing, swept to her knee. So far in her prosperous reign at Rushtonville, the only thing that hadn't bent to her will was the weather. It would rain, sometimes, when she desired it to shine, and shine occasionally, when she preferred it should rain. She was only seventeen—that is the only excuse I can make for her in the story I am to tell.

"Youth is not rich in time," and time has great value in our poor lives.

She was of course very selfish, but she did not mean to be cruel—not at first, when she condemned poor Horatia to another two days of breathless labor. She could not comprehend how tired Horatia was. She saw working people work: she considered it as natural as that rain should fall to water her gardens and peaches should grow for our eating "Can't do it?" she murmured, getting into her carriage. "There is no can't about it. I must have it."

You see Dr. Creighton was to be at the reception. That is why a new dress was required. Dr. Creighton was such a man as is not often found even in our best society. Thirty years of age, of great personal beauty, wealthy, of good family, and with the interest which foreign travel gives an intelligent man, he was generally pronounced a fine parti. His dark, spiritual beauty had fascinated Ada; she was probably not capable of any deeper feeling than fascination; and she was determined that he should notice her. She had been but little in New York society, and would as readily have fallen in love with a bad man, of polish, as a good one,—but Dr. Creighton was a gentleman in the true sense of the word.

The purple silk was done. Horatia set the last stitch, went up to her chamber, and fainted.

The blonde curls over the purple dress did their work, or Dr. Creighton might have found Mr. Rushton's aggregate of hard sense agreeable,—but he came out from the city in their carriage with them that night; (after a brief hour spent at Madame's;) drank wine and orange sherbert, and chatted in the drawing-room for two good hours before the carriage took him back again.

That was the beginning of his visiting Rushtonville; he came a dozen times before he chanced to see Horatia Glenn.

She was toiling up the stairs one day, as he came lightly down. Her hand was pressed to her side; she could not help it; the pain was almost unbearable.

The physician's quick eye caught the attitude, then rested upon the sweet face.

"Young lady, you are very ill," he said quickly.

Horatia started, stopped, as he had done, then answered faintly: "I am used to it," and would have passed on, but he asked:

"I beg your pardon—but who *are* you?"

"I am Miss Rushton's seamstress."

"Well, you are in a very bad condition, and must be taken care of," in his decided vernacular. But Horatia shrank from him without replying and was gone. She had seen Miss Rushton's gold and blue in the lower hall, and had an instinctive apprehension of her haughtiness if she discovered her talking with Dr. Creighton. But Dr. Creighton descended to the lower hall, and said promptly:

"That girl, Miss Rushton, is going to die if not immediately attended to."

"What girl?" asked Ada, in surprise.

"Your seamstress."

"Miss Glenn? I did not know that she was ill; she says nothing about it."

Dr. Creighton looked at her quietly from under his long black lashes. Had this soft beauty to whom he was almost engaged no heart? That poor girl's face told of long suffering. He was very silent during all the drive.

Gradually a deep red settled into Ada's round cheeks. Dr. Creighton had not yet asked her to be his wife; she surmised that he was thinking of Horatia Glenn, and she was furiously angry.

That evening as Horatia sat patiently embroidering Miss Rushton's monogram upon one of her cabinet handkerchiefs, she chanced to look up and saw Ada standing in the doorway looking at her.

Miss Rushton had been there for several minutes, long enough to detect, with malicious anger, the peculiar beauty of Horatia's face. The broad white lids of the downcast eyes, the noble, white forehead, the crown of dark braids, the graceful bust, were singular and attractive.

"Miss Glenn," she said icily, "you need not finish that work. I shall not need your services further."

Disregarding Horatia's startled glance, she went on:

"Here is the amount I owe you, and twenty dollars beside, which you may find convenient. You will leave my house at once."

Horatia asked no questions; she knew she was innocent of any harm, though her heart swelled with indignation and grief at the implied accusation of Miss Rushton's manner. The shock of her emotions made her faint as she went up to her chamber, but resolutely getting her few possessions into a valise, she descended again, and left the house.

It was a pleasant March evening. There had been several warm days, moderate weather enough to break the icy chain of the streams and bring the blue birds back.

The peace of the amber west, the sweet, fresh air, and the chanting of a whippoorwill calmed and strengthened her for the three-mile walk which lay between her and the next town, where was a simple country hotel, to which she had decided to go.

But the river divided Rushtonville from Southford. As she approached it, she heard the rush of its torrents, and remembered she had been told that it had broken up, and a large volume of water was coming down.

The roar increased,—the air echoed with the rush and dash of the wild, released waters: as Horatia came nearer, she felt all the ground tremble.

Black, swollen to a great heighth, she paused and looked at the strange sight. Where once had been calm, now all was tempest. The force of the waters was awful. But it was growing dark—she dared not stay long, and hurried down to the bridge.

The structure was trembling, but she hastened on, ignorant of her danger.

Half-way across, there was a crash, a rush, an upheaving of the planks beneath her feet,—she was thrown upon her face.

The bridge had been swept away, and went tossing down the black current. The water surged up, between the planks, upon the prostrate girl. She struggled upon her knees and clung, gasping, to the rail of the floating bridge. So she drifted, in danger of being momentarily submerged, until the structure was tossed upon a point of land, tangled in the branches of a fallen tree, and stopped.

It had grown dark, the moon had come up, and by-and-by she saw lights upon the shore, and heard men calling and shouting. But they did not see her, she had no hope that they would, unless she could make some sign to them. Her call would never be heard above the roar of the river. But she patiently waved her white handkerchief until they caught sight of it.

After much difficulty and toil she was rescued. It was midnight; so, wrapped in a cloak, she was taken in a carriage to Southford. She had "taken her death," the good woman who received her said, marking the ague chill and the burning fever flush.

"Get Dr. Creighton to come in a moment, Thomas," she whispered. "He's gone out to spend the night with gouty old Squire Messenger, who thinks there is no one like him. He always stays all night when he visits the squire. Tell him a poor girl—"

But the messenger had gone.

Horatia, tossing in feverish delirium upon her pillow, did not know her physician—knew nothing for weeks of what was passing around her.

She opened her eyes calmly at last. A robin was whistling merrily at the window; the elm branches and the May sky looked in between the white-looped curtains.

Then ensued long months of convalescence; during which the Doctor grew to know well and value his beautiful patient. One day in September, when Horatia was fully restored to health, he spoke.

"Horatia," said he, "you have had enough suffering for one lifetime. Will you come to my home, and let me take care of you there? I want a wife, and I want *you*."

Out of darkness cometh light; out of Ada Rushton's jealousy came this happiness for our Horatia.

☞ A bachelor editor, who had a pretty unmarried sister, lately wrote to another similarly circumstanced, "Please exchange."

☞ A south-western editor remarks: "If in our school days the rule of three is proverbially trying, how much harder, in after life, do we find the rule of *one*." He has been married only fourteen months.

☞ San Francisco is proud of the circumstance that its streets are "swept by hand" once a fortnight. We should think it more convenient to have them swept by broom.

MY PATIENT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY J. M. MALONE.

One wild, bleak November night, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-eight—after a fatiguing day of professional labor, I sat, comfortably gowned and slippered, before a bright glowing fire in our little sitting-room, mentally comparing my present cosy situation with the driving storm of snow and wind without, and anon listening to the pleasant chattering of my *petite* wife, Therese, who sat close at my side.

"Jules," she somewhat abruptly said, addressing me in the midst of a little bit of nonsense that she was rehearsing, and inclining her head in a listening attitude towards the rattling shutters, "hear how mournfully the wind sobs and rumbles in the street, and how violently it comes swooping against the house!" And with a slight shiver she nestled up close to my side, and sat silently for some moments intently regarding the bright blazing fire.

"It does indeed rumble and sob drearily, my dear," I replied; "but then here and with you, I do not mind it."

"I was thinking, Jules, what if you had to go out to-night!" she softly said, looking up into my face.

"Let us hope not, Therese," I returned, shivering at the bare thought of turning out into the bleak storm.

"Oh, I do hope not," she said. And she fell to chattering again, as gayly as ever.

But hardly had she begun, and our little unpleasant interruption been forgotten, when there came a sudden, violent jerking at the door-bell.

"There!" she pettishly broke off, "there! I knew they would come and take my Jules out into the storm."

I laughingly kissed her, and went to answer the summons myself. My unwelcome visitor proved to be a boy—a ragged, beggarly-looking fellow, who, in a few brief words, informed me that I was wanted forthwith professionally at the house of a poor bricklayer in the western suburbs of the city, the man's wife being both violently and dangerously ill. And he gave me minute instructions how and where to find the place.

Loth I was to leave my cheerful fireside and tampt the fierce bitterness of the storm without, which, as the night grew on to its waning, grew fiercer and bitterer with it; yet the call was an imminent one, and one that could be neither ignored nor procrastinated; and keenly alive to this fact I returned to the sitting-room, where, with the aid of my precious little Therese, I unhesitatingly exchanged my light gown and slippers for a heavy coat and boots, preparatory to setting out.

As the distance was but short, I concluded to make my way on foot to the bricklayer's house; and after tenderly kissing my wife and bidding her not sit up and await my return, I sought the slushy street.

The night was indeed a disagreeable one, and ere I had gone forth I had but a faint conception of how bad it really was. The snow as it fell was drifted up in great piles upon the narrow sidewalks, at once presenting a barrier both formidable and dangerous; the sharp, spiteful wind dashed madly along the open streets, shrieking and bellowing defiantly among house-tops and chimnies, surging with terrible force against doors and rattling shutters, and scattering the blinding snow in every conceivable direction; while the pale, ghastly glare of the flickering street lamps shone like quivering stars in an unquiet, dusky sky.

Nevertheless, when once started, I made pretty good headway; and after passing through a number of long, irregular streets and as many dark, winding alleys, so narrow that the drifting snow could barely effect an entrance, I found myself without the limits of the city. This I could very readily discern, for here all at once the street that I was traversing took the character of a road or pike, and wound its black, serpentine course irregularly through the broad, spacious common that stretched itself away for miles before me; the houses, quaint, dilapidated looking structures, were but few and scattering, and started suddenly and frowningly up in the midst of that great plain of snow, like gaunt black monsters of the black, howling night; while the cold, grizzled sky, with its leaden bearing and its dismal scowl, which had hitherto been revealed to me only in long, narrow streaks as it stared spitefully down at the slushy streets, was now plainly visible throughout its whole wild and stormy extent.

Pausing here for an instant to assure myself that I had implicitly followed my director's instructions—that I had not mistakingly wandered from my way—I carefully singled out from a motley cluster of houses, some hundred yards before me, a small, reticent-looking cot, as the one whither I was bound. It was a very small and rude affair—so I found upon coming up to it—standing alone in an open and unprotected spot upon the bleak common, and totally isolated from its mangy surrounding neighbors. The walls were low and shrunken, and great yawning crevices gaped at every little interval, as though the very logs had shrunk and contracted in the pitiless cold of that raw, cold night, and were cowering together for warmth and for comfort. There were no signs of life about the shapeless hovel, save a pale, yellow light that came in checkered floods through every crack and cranny, and fell like quivering, ghostly shadows upon the snow at my feet.

Crossing the small, uneven yard, I paused at the battered door and rapped. No response. I rapped again—louder. This served to bring my immediate proximity into notice, for directly I heard a low, shuffling noise within—then the heavy slouching footsteps of a man dragging slowly across the floor, and then the iron clink and rattle of a chain at the door.

At last, after a weary waiting of some minutes in the bleak and cheerless storm, it opened, and a great flood of blinding light came pouring full into my face. For an instant I was forced to turn away, and to shield my eyes with my hand.

"Well, what brings you here to-night?" a hoarse voice abruptly greeted me.

He, the man who had just spoken, and who stood squarely in the aperture formed by the opening of the door, holding high above his head a flaring tallow candle, was a man of middle-aged appearance, thin and wiry built, and clad in the coarse, rude garb that at once distinguished him as a brave son of toil. In the very uncertain light that illumined it, his face looked pale and ghastly, and the rough, uneven beard upon his chin, which bore a dark and grizzled hue, evidently heightened this deadly cast; long, tangled hair, the same in point of color as his frosted beard, fell refractorily over his forehead and about his shoulders; while his eyes, red and fiery-looking, gleamed at me from beneath a pair of shaggy brows with a strange, wild, irregular light.

"Well, what brings you here to-night?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," I hastily replied, thinking perhaps after all I had made a mistake; "but are you not M. Grevy?"

"Jean Grevy—yes," he confirmed, eyeing me with a sort of uneasy air.

"I thought so," I observed. "I was requested to call here—"

"Ah, you are the doctor, then? Come in." And he moved to one side, and thrust the door further open, thus allowing me room for entrance.

There was a dull, flickering fire—a mere handful—burning upon the broad hearth; and at a motion from the man, I went up and stood near it. He, however, paused for a moment at the door to refasten the crazy, creaking old thing; and he barred it heavily, and for this purpose used the sharp clanking chain that I had heard whilst waiting without. Then he came up, and depositing the flaming candle upon a low stool, stood beside me.

While he was doing this, I was busily engaged in surveying the bare and shabby room into which I had been so unceremoniously ushered. The whole interior was black and smoke-begrimed, and presented a very uninviting and uncleanly appearance. In one corner, near the broad fireplace, were promiscuously piled a number of cooking utensils, wearing the same sooty coat that garbed the roof and the cold, bare walls; directly above these rose a rude cupboard, no doubt fashioned and framed by the unskillful hands of the owner of the dilapidated cot; while upon the other side of the room were a rough, undressed table, a low stool, and a few rickety chairs, that, judging from their worn condition, must have seen service in the lifetime of Jean Grevey's great grandfather. In a remote angle of the hovel, where the unchinked crevices gaped the broadest and took in the greatest share of the cold, bitter night, stood a low, old-fashioned bedstead, curiously carved, and covered with a worn and tattered blanket.

This latter article complemented the household furniture, and in it reclined the sick woman, I supposed. For my eye at once detected an unusual bulk or protuberance beneath the dirty blanket, which bore the shape and semblance of a human body.

"She's a sleep now," said the man, eyeing me and then eyeing the bulk beneath the tattered blanket which I was also closely looking at. "She's asleep now, but will awaken by-and-by."

He turned around as he spoke, and taking a rude iron poker from the hearth vigorously stirred up the sinking, dismal fire; but without producing much effect. Then he brought up a couple of the hideously creaking chairs, and seating himself upon one, directed me with a slight wave of his hand to the other.

"Has she been ill for some time?" I softly asked, taking the seat proffered me.

"For some time?" he reiterated, as though asking himself the question. "For some time?"

"Yes," I said.

"For a long time," he slowly rejoined, looking moodily into the glowing embers, "though not down. She took down only three days ago."

"Ah!" I ejaculated. "Yet you have had medical attendance for her ere this?"

"I bought some medicines yesterday," he gruffly returned.

"And fire—surely you have had more than this handful of fire?"

"How could I?" he cried almost fiercely, turning his red, gleaming eyes full upon me, and contorting his ghastly visage—made ghastly no doubt by long and incessant watching—until it was rendered perfectly hideous in the glaring light. "I could not go out and work: I have been compelled to sit here day and night by Annette's side; all our little savings I was forced to spend for food and medicine for her. How could I?"

"But surely," I urged in conciliatory tones, looking with compassion upon the poor wretch—"there are those in this great christian city who would willingly have succored you had they but been appealed to."

"In this great christian city!" he bitterly repeated, a smile of contempt wreathing his white lips. "Yes, yes, perhaps so. But then we did not care to ask. Annette was warmly wrapped in bed, and as to myself I did not care."

Then he bent lower over the smouldering embers, and sat for some moments evidently engrossed in deep study.

"We had determined on going to the country—Annette and I, when spring came," he said, somewhat abruptly, in a low, musing tone, after full a minute of protracted silence. "But as she is so very ill now, and as we have been forced to spend all our little savings, it will be longer."

"To the country," I replied, thinking of nothing else to say just then.

He nodded affirmatively and said—

"You have been there?"

"Frequently," I told him, my curiosity suddenly excited at the strange manner in which the man rambled on.

"I never have," he pursued in the same musing strain. "Annette has been there though. She has often told me about it—about its green fields, and its waving forests, and its plashing, sparkling rivers. Annette was born there."

Here he fell into another reverie which lasted a long time—in fact, until I had become utterly impatient, and being greatly oppressed by the stinging cold, and the general languor that it produced, I peremptorily demanded to see Annette.

"She's asleep now," he said again. "We will not awake her yet. O, no."

"No need to do that," I hastily rejoined, arising to my feet. "From her sound and unbroken slumbers I infer that she is out of all present danger, and will not require my immediate attention further. I can very easily ascertain if this be the case without awakening her."

He somewhat reluctantly yielded to my request, and leading the way to the flimsy bed-side he threw askant the dirty, tattered blanket.

"See how sweetly Annette is sleeping," he said. "Maybe even now she is dreaming of the beautiful country whither we are going by-and-by."

The face revealed to me was evidently that of a woman's, and—though not a very old one, was, withal, wan and shrunken and ghastly; the ported lips, so thin and cold and mute, displayed two rows of tightly-set, hideously-gleaming teeth: and the great black, expressive eyes, bearing such a marked contrast to the pale, white face, were opened to their widest extent, and were staring up with a dull, leaden stare.

I pressed my hand upon the white face. It was cold and icy to my touch. I bent my ear to catch a breath—a sound. Not the faintest escaped the glaring lips. And I knew that Annette had gone to the country.

"She is dead!" I said, looking with pity upon the man at my side.

"Dead!" he hoarsely echoed, looking imperturbably into the face. "Oh, no; you mistake! Annette is not dead—she is only sleeping!"

Fraught with wonder I turned to the bricklayer and attentively regarded him for a moment. A strange idea had suddenly crept into my brain.

He bent over the icy form and took one of the chill hands in his own.

"She will be better when she awakes," he said, "she has been sleeping so quietly for hours!"

At once the idea that I had caught up was confirmed into an indisputable, astounding truth; and at the same time the man's wild rambling was clearly and intelligibly explained to me. In a word he was *mad!*—the death of his wife, which it was plainly evident had happened some hours previous, had wrought so strongly upon him as to completely shatter his intellect.

"I was with her this morning when she fell asleep so soundly," he pursued, rubbing the cold hands, "and a demon came and whispered in my ear that she was dead! But I would not believe the foul thing. Now you would make me believe that it's so!"

And he glanced fiercely at me with his wild gleaming eyes, which had suddenly assumed a wilder and fiercer expression.

My first thoughts, upon recovering from the consternation into which I had been thrown by this appalling discovery were to get him quieted, and to abate as much as possible the cerebral distemper that was rapidly growing upon him. And to do this I was alive to the fact that it was essentially necessary to draw him away at once from the radical cause or producing element of this great nervous stroke.

"Come, let her sleep then," I said, thinking to humor his morbid fancy.

"Listen!" he exclaimed in a whisper, bending his ear listeningly towards the door, and not the most remotely heeding my solicitation. "Listen."

"'Tis nothing but the wind," I urged. For it was a heavy, fitful gust—dashing and bawling and shrieking along, that had aroused him.

"Not the wind, but demons!" he cried in a low, startled tone, his disorder fully developed. "There are legions of them! Listen how fiercely they press upon one another; how they howl and shriek and sob; how they surge and rattle at the door! Ha! they're trying to enter! They're trying to force their way in to my poor Annette!"

He stood panting and trembling over her, holding the poor, dead, withered thing in his arms, his glowing eyes emitting sparks of almost living fire.

"'Tis nothing but the wind and the storm, poor man," I said. "Come away, and we will talk more of Annette and of the beautiful country whither you are going by-and-by."

I moved up to his side as I spoke, and laying one hand quietly upon his arm, with the other I strove to disengage the icy body from his iron grasp.

"Away!" he shrieked, turning upon me with a howl of rage. "Would you steal her from me?"

"No, I would not take her from you," I said. "No one shall do that."

Uttering another furious howl he shook off my hand: then he drew the cold, stiffened body up to an erect, sitting posture beside him.

The white face, the mocking lips, and the staring eyes of the dead woman piercing out from the dark, with the not much less ghastlier visage of the man, was not only mockingly farcical in itself, but truly disgusting; and unwilling longer to endure the sight, I walked boldly up, and succeeded in drawing him away. This accomplished, I proceeded to arrange in a more decent and becoming condition the corpse, which yet sat erect, upheld by the low head-board of the bedstead. But hardly had my hands touched it, when, with a howl and a spring, the infuriated madman darted upon me from behind, and with all his united strength, hurled me headlong to the further side of the cot.

Though slightly stunned, I quickly rose to my feet, and turned to meet him. For he was now slowly advancing upon me, his eyes gleaming with terrible brilliancy.

However, even with the assault he had made, I did not regard my situation as a perilous one; for I believed that his turbulent paroxysm could, in a measure, be abated by pacific reasonings; and it was with such, and without the least thoughts of force, that I turned to receive him.

"You do not know me, Jean Grevy?" I asked, holding out my hand toward him.

"Know you, fiend!" he shrieked, coming to a sudden pause a few feet away from me. "Away! away! away!" And he waved his long arm threateningly above his head.

"I am your friend, Jean—the doctor," I continued.

"You are leagued with the demons! you are one of them!" he cried in a hoarse whisper.

"No."

"Curse you!" he screamed, and he lunged at my throat.

So entirely unexpected and so precipitate was his spring, that I had not time to grapple with him ere his massive strength bore me headlong to the ground. Then he planted his knees firmly upon my breast, and fastened his iron, vice-like gripe upon my throat.

"Would you murder me, Jean Grevy?" I shrieked in a low, stifled voice, as I lay there perfectly passive to the madman's will.

A wild laugh, sounding more like the howl of an infuriated demon, was the only answer he gave me.

His short, labored breath poured thick and hot upon my flushed and burning cheek: his red, glowering eyes, in which not one ray of mercy shone, peered narrowly and fiercely down into mine; while his hand, encircling my throat, seemed like a coiling serpent of fire, slowly and by degrees contracting and strangling me fearfully. Above us—for we lay near the bedside—sat the rigid, ghastly corpse of the woman, glaring down upon us with the stony, leaden stare of death, and grinning horribly at us with her shrivelled lips and her gleaming teeth, that in the misty light bore such a strange, sepulchral whiteness.

In that terrible moment I closed my eyes, thinking that death was upon me. But somehow the thought acted as a stimulus, passing through my brain and nerves like some great electric shock, and serving to arouse me from the lethargic stupor into which I was fast sinking. And then commenced a terrible struggle between us—a struggle for life or death.

With superhuman effort I tore loose his grasp from my throat, and linking my arms firmly about him, we rolled over and over on the rough, uneven floor. My brain was turning, whirling, and felt all on fire; my eyes seemed starting from their sockets; and for the moment I thought that I was mad too. At least I had all the strength and fierceness of a maniac, for I fought as wildly and as madly as he.

Up and down, first upon our feet, then upon our knees, then upon the floor, we strove and tugged, neither the one nor the other having the mastery. Sometimes we would pause to regain our shortened breath, and we would stand and glare balefully at each other; but upon the next instant, as if by mutual consent, the contest was fiercely renewed.

It must have lasted thus full five minutes, when, just as we had again measured our full length upon the floor, as if entirely overcome, or as though some paralyzing stroke had suddenly seized him, he relaxed his grasp, and I, being above, easily sprang away from him, and to my feet.

He, however, did not rise, and directly I went and knelt down beside him to see if he was in any manner injured. His eyes were closed, his teeth tightly clenched, and his respiration was short and heavy.

I quickly raised him from the floor, and seated him upon a chair near the fireplace. But he was utterly powerless now, and it was a long time ere he opened his eyes, when I saw at a glance that they were very dull, and that their fire, like that fed by the vegetable substance upon the hearth, was nearly gone out.

"Annette, Annette!" I heard him softly murmur. "We are going to—to the country—to—"

A slight shiver passed through his frame; his eyes closed again; and his head sank heavily forward upon his breast. He had gone to the country, and was with Annette. He had gone to the country even while it was far off from the cheerful spring-time; but it was to a Country far away, where winter never comes—whose fields are ever soft and green: whose plashing, sprinkling rivers and waving forests are always bright, and upon whose Golden Shores the radiant sunlight eternally and unfailingly beams.

☞ There is never a man so bad, says a celebrated writer, but some woman loves him and has faith in him.

Sowing and Reaping.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY HELEN HARCOURT.

PART FIRST.

"Oh, my son, my son, you are dragging me down to the grave!"

"Pshaw! You talk like one without sense, mother. I shall do just as I choose. Thank the stars I am rich, and am not tied to your apron strings! It will not do the least good to cry; I am old enough to take care of myself, and shall do so, too."

The speakers, as the reader will ere this have gathered from their words, were mother and son.

The apartment in which they were seated was furnished with a luxuriance that bespoke the presence, not alone of wealth, but of what is more rare, a pure and exquisite taste.

The lady was a widow. The man (alas! that such things can be,) was her only son. By his wild course of profligacy during the four years which had elapsed since the law had given him possession of his large inheritance, Robert Baldwin had drawn heavy lines of care and sorrow upon his mother's face, and had whitened the hair which should still have been black as the raven's wing.

Heavily indeed had the hand of grief been laid upon her—grief of a kind more bitter, more incurable than that sorrow which is caused by death—for, although it leaves an aching void in the heart, it does not console. Ah! there are living troubles which are far, far more poignant than those which are wrought by *death!*

Mrs. Baldwin had spoken but the truth: her son was dragging her down to the grave. "Time works wonders," but grief still greater, and so the once stately lady who had moved with such grace amid the splendors of the world of wealth and fashion, admired and envied—had become a hopeless invalid—shutting herself out from society, and tirelessly seeking, by earnest prayer and the gentle powers of a mother's devotion, to bring her wayward son back within the influence of virtue and of right.

"Oh, Robert! Robert," she answered him, "you were not always thus. It is those wicked men who flatter you because you have money; it is *they* who have so changed you. Oh! my son, I pray that *you* may never know what it is to have a child who—"

"There! that will do; I have heard enough of your cant. Since you will not let me have any peace, I will leave the house!"

And the angry man strode from the room, the violent shutting of the hall door a moment later, proving that he had kept his word.

It is expedient that we accompany him, as with hurried steps he threads his way through the crowded streets of the city, and pauses before a small, dingy brick building.

Several pedestrians were in sight, and Baldwin, with his hands thrust in his pockets and whistling idly, sauntered on again until they had disappeared in the distance.

Then he turned and hastily retraced his steps. A single rap, then an interval, followed by four more raps upon the door, each stroke clear and distinct, was the signal that obtained for him an unquestioned admittance into the gambling-house, for such in truth it was, though it bore no outward mark to distinguish it from the other dwellings in the street, which were all occupied by honest, quiet people.

A slouching, half intoxicated serving-man answered Baldwin's summons, and glancing at the visitor, pulled his hair in token of respect, then silently ushered the latter into a large apartment in the third story of the building.

Several tables, covered with green cloth, were scattered about the room, and seated at the one in the centre were four men deeply engaged in play.

They glanced up as Baldwin entered, greeting him with a shout.

"Hallo, Bob, just in the nick o' time, old fellow. Sit down and take a hand," cried a young man, whose bloated face and blood-shot eyes testified to a life of dissipation. "Come, seat yourself, Baldwin. Here is my partner going to desert me, because he has nothing more to stake. In truth, we have had such a bad run of luck, Dick and I, that I am nearly bankrupt too. But 'it's a long lane that has no turning,' so take Dick's place, Bob, and we will try to pay off these fellows. That is right," as Baldwin occupied the vacant chair. "I would like to kick that fellow out of the room," he added, lowering his voice, "he's as hard to deal with as an old woman."

"Ha! would you?" exclaimed his late partner, pausing at the door. "Thank you, Will Braddon, and in return for your kind wish let me give you a warning—not you alone, but all. Look well to yourselves! Beware, I say, for *now* I know you for what you are, a set of as great scoundrels as ever lured a man to his ruin." The speaker's voice faltered, and a tear dimmed his eye, but forcing it back, he continued, in a hard, ringing tone—"Will Braddon, I have a word to say to you. These men, who are greater scoundrels than yourself, are using you as a decoy-duck to lead men to this accursed place, and to ruin them as they have me. Beware, Braddon, lest you fall their victim as well. One word more—perhaps I do wrong to speak it—I go from hence directly to the police station. Back, back!" he shouted, as the men he threatened rose to their feet, and made a movement as though to seize him. "Back, on your peril," and drawing a pair of pistols from his pocket, the young man directed them towards the group. "Ah, you are amenable to reason, I see. And now I have no more to say, save that I shall take care that no more poor fools are ruined by you, in this house at least."

Then, with a stern, proud look upon his white face, Dick Martin turned from the room, and a moment afterwards was hastening with a haggard, suffering face and unsteady steps—far away from the fatal table, where in a few short hours he had lost his all; nothing remained which he could call his own, save the neat little dwelling in which he had sheltered his widowed mother, and young sister.

It is true, Richard Martin had never been rich, but he had been possessed of property sufficient to maintain him in comfort and independence.

But now! He turned his back upon the gambling-house, as many another erring brother had done before, and will do, so long as the world shall last, with the bitter knowledge that years of unremitting toil must be his lot, ere he could hope to replace his mother and sister in the position of ease and comfort from which his folly, nay, his crime, had dragged them down.

But two short months before he had been a happy, lighthearted youth, of spotless integrity.

But "a wolf" had crept into his confidence, seeking his friendship only that he might abuse it—"a false friend is worse than an open enemy," saith an old adage, and most bitterly was young Martin destined to experience its truth.

Cautiously, step by step, did Will Braddon draw the toils about his unsuspecting victim.

First he was persuaded to enter the "private" gambling house, "just for curiosity's sake, to look on awhile," and next, from being merely a spectator, he had been led on to take a hand, "only for this once, to make up the set."

And thus was Dick Martin ensnared in the net so skilfully woven around him. Upon the evening on which our tale opens, the gamblers had resolved to cease "playing" with their victim, and instead, to administer the "coup de grace."

Every wile, every art was employed, and alas! not in vain; for we have already witnessed the result.

A result which opened Dick Martin's eyes, and enabled him at last to behold in all their heinousness the artifices to which he had been a willing dupe.

"And their leader," he murmured, as he rapidly paced the streets; "their leader is my cousin, the son of my mother's only brother! My mother, my poor mother. May God forgive my sin, even as I know *she* will!"

Repentant, remorseful, the unhappy young man turned his steps homewards, eager, yet dreading, to confess the sin and its consequences to his gentle mother, and to consult with her upon the best means to take with regard to their future.

His own property he had inherited from his uncle; and although his mother possessed some small property in her own right, the income derived from this source was barely sufficient to support herself alone, even with the strictest economy.

And now let us return for a moment to the apartment in which sat Baldwin and his confederates.

"Well, Mr. Braddon!" exclaimed Baldwin, angrily, as Martin disappeared from their sight, "a fine trouble have you got us all into now! Why could you not play a little longer with him, instead of making such a sudden sweep as to arouse his suspicions that we have not played fair? A *sweep* did I say? Forsooth, 'twas no sweep at all. He has a house left yet. You are a poor manager, Will Braddon,—to say the best of you."

"Be careful, Baldwin, or—"

"Peace, peace," interrupted their companions; "would you stand here quarreling until the police walk in on you? Peace! and let us take counsel, for we are not safe here another hour."

The consultation that followed was brief but earnest, and when the gamblers separated, it was with the understanding that for the present, at least, the house should be closed.

Baldwin, whose irregular proceedings had ever been skillfully concealed from the world, it was agreed should remain in the city, while his companions, who were well known to the police, decided to flee at once to some far western town, there to ply their nefarious trade, until Baldwin should notify them that they might return in safety.

The apartment in which the scene we have witnessed occurred, was the only one in the building which could furnish any clue to the business carried on, being in fact the only one which had been furnished or occupied for several years.

Summoning the servant already referred to, Baldwin (to whom the house belonged), despatched him in search of a wagon, and then, aided by his eager confederates, proceeded to transfer to the vehicle every article of furniture that the apartment contained.

Within an hour from the moment of Dick Martin's quitting the house which had proved so fatal to his peace, a stranger, passing through it from cellar to roof, would have been impressed with the belief that it had lain untenanted for a considerable period; such, indeed, was the report of a posse of police who visited the premises on the following morning, in accordance with information lodged before their chief by Dick Martin some hours previously.

Arriving upon the ground too late, there remained nothing to verify the young man's complaint, and so the affair was allowed to drop without further inquiry.

In a bright, cheerful apartment, looking out upon one of the quieter streets of the great city, sat a lady and a rosy-cheeked girl of some twelve summers.

They were gazing out, as the twilight shadows grew thicker and darker,—watching, as was their wont, for the welcome approach of the son and brother upon whom their comfort and happiness so utterly depended.

A bright fire was blazing and crackling in the grate, diffusing a cheerful warmth upon all around it.

The lamps were not yet lighted, and, in one corner of the room, scarcely to be distinguished from the carpet on which he lay, was a curly-headed little boy, his head resting upon a large Newfoundland dog, and his arms clasped about its neck, while he peacefully slumbered on, fearlessly trusting in his noble playfellow's gentleness.

It was a beautiful picture of quiet, domestic happiness,—such a picture as oftimes makes earth akin to Heaven,—the glowing fire, the sweet, placid face of the mother, the gay, light-heartedness of the daughter, the sleeping child nestled down close to the motionless dog,—and, toning down and mellowing the whole, the soft evening twilight stealing in at the window,—a peaceful, happy scene, indeed.

"Look, mamma, here he comes!" cried Lucy; "and,—why,—he has passed the window without even looking up, the mean boy!"

The child was right; the customary nod and smile with which Dick Martin was used to greet the dear ones who were ever at that hour upon the watch for his return, were omitted now,—he did not even glance up to the window.

He did not wish to meet the bright glances which he knew were awaiting him there; he felt that he did not merit them, and so, with downcast eyes and heavy heart, he ascended the stairs, and entered his mother's presence.

"Dick, what has happened? Are you ill, my poor boy?"

Her quick, loving eye, at the first glance, detected the wild, haggard expression which had so unwontedly settled down upon her son's manly face.

"He's cold, *that* is the matter, I know," laughed Lucy; "and it serves him right, for staying out so late, when it is so nice and cosy at home. Ugh! how the wind blows! I'm glad we have such a warm house to live in, and plenty of money to buy warm things to wear."

Her brother's white face grew yet whiter as she spoke, and with a short, quick gasp, he turned towards her.

"Lucy, I want to speak with mother alone." Without a word, only casting a surprised look upon him, as he stood leaning against the mantel, Lucy quietly left the room.

The silence continued unbroken for some moments.

Martin stood like a statue, cold, pale, stern, utterly motionless, save for the quick heaving of his breast, in the sharp struggle to maintain the composure that seemed about to desert him, now, in the hour of his greatest need.

And his mother?

Her own face was well nigh as haggard as that of her idolized son, for she needed no speech to assure that some great trouble had overtaken him.

"Dick, my darling boy, will you not tell your grief to your mother. Has she not merited your confidence?"

"Mother! Mother!" burst in agony from his lips, as he knelt before her, and buried his face in her lap. "O mother, hush! I cannot bear it, I cannot! Upbraid me, reproach me, cast me off,—do anything but treat me kindly!"

Sobs choked his utterance, and his stalwart frame shook as a reed before the storm.

Never before had the mother beheld her son so moved, and her voice trembled when she spoke, passing her hand caressingly the while over his clustering hair.

"Hush, hush, my boy. Be more calm; tell me what has chanced to grieve you, Dick? Speak to me freely, my dear, dear son; you know you were never wont to keep your troubles from me. Your griefs have always been mine, for do I not love you more than myself?"

"Mother, hush! you do not know how unworthy I am of your love. Mother, my darling mother, I—I have ruined you, brought poverty upon you all! I allowed myself to be blinded, and led away by wicked men, whom I believed to be my friends. I gambled—yes, mother, I *gambled!* At first I won; they permitted me to do so—I know it now—that I might be encouraged to venture on still farther. I was their dupe, and I have met the reward of my sin. Would to heaven I might bear it alone! This afternoon they won from me everything—everything save this one house. I am well nigh penniless. Mother, my poor, injured mother, can you forgive me? I do not deserve it, but oh! you will not send me from you in anger."

The young man raised his haggard, care-worn face pleadingly towards his mother's, and his dark eyes, moist with tears, gazed sadly into hers; not anger, only gentleness and love read he there, and a great weight was lifted from his heart as he felt that forgiveness would not be denied him.

PART SECOND.

Mother and son sat late into the night in earnest consultation regarding their future plans.

Many were proposed, discussed and rejected as impracticable, until at length Mrs. Martin's thoughts reverted to that small property of which we have already spoken.

Left penniless by her husband's early death, she had been sheltered and tenderly cared for by his only brother, who dying soon after, had bequeathed to her the bulk of his small possessions, from which legacy she had derived the little pittance which came to her, independent of her son.

This farm now lay vacant for the first time in many years, and to the friendly shelter it offered she now proposed to retire.

Her son did not close his eyes that night; thought was too busily at work to readily resign her empire, and ere morning dawned upon the world again, he had resolved to act upon his mother's suggestion, and that, too, without needless delay. For he was eager, painfully eager to begin his work of reparation, anxious to find himself in a situation where unremitting toil would assuredly enable him to support in comfort the dear ones whom his own sin had so nearly ruined.

He was eager to go to work, and not less eager to flee from the scene of his temptation, and alas, of his fall.

Bad news proverbially travels with lightning speed, and Dick Martin was well aware that his change of fortune could not long be concealed from the many "butterfly friends" who having courted his society so long as the sun shone upon his path, would now in his adversity treat him with neglect and scorn.

And Dick, in his remorseful humility, felt that he could not blame those who should turn their backs upon him, for, not fickle fortune, but his own sin, had darkened his path, and it was but just that he should suffer the penalty.

Did he live alone, were not other lives twined closely about his own, Dick Martin's pride would have urged him to remain in his native place, and by a steady, upright course, live down the reproach he had brought upon himself.

But he was not alone, and so casting aside all thoughts of self, and thinking only of his mother and sister and brother, he bent all his energies to the fulfillment of the plain duties that lay before him.

To remove westward was certainly the most feasible plan that could have been proposed; it promised comfort for the present, and competence for the future.

Mrs. Martin's property comprised several hundred acres of rich land. The greater portion of which had never been cultivated, while, in the midst of the fertile fields which had known the plow, stood a comfortable house, and a commodious barn.

The expenses of building would therefore not have to be incurred, and, for the necessary stock and farming implements, the money to be obtained from the sale of the house the family then occupied, would be ample, even leaving a surplus with which to meet the smaller outlays which might be found unavoidable at the outset of their new life.

Leaving the mother and son to perfect their arrangements, it is expedient that we return to Robert Baldwin, and note his proceedings.

Almost at the self-same hour during which the police were engaged in their fruitless search of the deserted gambling house, its owner descended to the breakfast-room of his luxurious home, with unsteady steps and blood-shot eyes, the result of a night of dissipation.

His sorrowing mother gazed upon his shaking hands and uncertain movements in silence.

At length she spoke, venturing once more upon remonstrance, even though she knew but too well that its only result would be to draw down upon her the harsh anger of her only child.

"Robert, dear Robert, you are not well! Indeed, my son, the course of life you are pursuing must inevitably cut short your days."

"There, that will do!" he interrupted. "I am tired of your never-ending croaking—I will have no more of it,—do you hear, madame?"

And he struck his clenched hand heavily upon the table—careful, however, to turn his guilty face away—for, lost, depraved, as he was, conscience was not yet so completely deadened, that he could utter such words, and yet meet his injured mother's gaze.

"Robert, my son, I tremble when I think of the possibility of death's coming to you suddenly. Think, my boy, what have you to plead at the Judgment-seat of your outraged God? Oh! my son, my son!"

Her voice died away in a thrilling wail of grief, and Baldwin sprang from his chair, his features convulsed with passion.

"Did you understand me, when I said that I would have no more of this. Another such word, and one of us two shall leave this house; and *I* shall not be the one, madame! Do you hear this time!"

"Robert!" exclaimed his mother, "to your *shame* I must say that I *do* hear! Listen now to the last words I have to say to you, unless the day should come when you repent of your sins. I have striven, in vain, to win you back to the right—henceforth I strive no more. God alone can touch your hardened heart. You threaten to turn me from this house; you forget, in your anger, Robert, that this house belongs not to you, but to *me*. 'Tis you who must leave it—for I can bear your insults no longer."

She paused a moment, while her son, with scowling brow, stood before her in silent wonder at this new phase of his mother's character; she, whom he had till of late ruled with ease, whose whole comfort in life had seemed to centre in ministering to his wishes: she, his gentle mother, was now exhibiting a firmness and dignity of which he had deemed her incapable.

She continued with flushed cheeks and hard, stern voice, struggling fiercely to conceal the agony it cost her to utter such words, and her strength did not fail her: her son's heart was touched for an instant with remorse, as he felt that his mother had cast him out from her love, even as she had cast him out from her home.

"We can live together no longer, Robert. You are rich, you need no help from me, and henceforth our paths must lie asunder; mine will be but a short one, the end of my journey mercifully draws near. Oh, Robert!" and the mother's voice grew softer, and a trifle less firm, "for the last time your mother warns you to repent ere it be too late. God will save you if you will but ask Him. Oh, my son, my son, think of the eternal future; it is for joy or woe as you yourself shall choose. And now farewell, you must go."

Then Mrs. Baldwin turned to leave the room, but ere she reached the door she looked back. There was no sorrow or repentance upon her son's face; anger, fierce, bitter anger was written there—that was all.

"Farewell, my son; oh, my poor boy, let us at least part as friends."

She extended her hand, but he stepped backwards, away from her.

"No, I will not play the hypocrite. You have turned me out of your house, and I will go without the least regret; on the contrary, I rejoice that you have given me so good an excuse for leaving you."

He strode out of the apartment, and ascending to his own room, busied himself in packing the various articles that were scattered around.

This done, he proceeded down stairs and gave directions to one of the servants concerning his trunks.

"I am going to travel," he said, in reply to the man's wondering looks.

Nevertheless he had no such thought; his intention was to take up his quarters at a hotel which was kept by one of his associates.

He had been but a few hours in his new abode, when he remembered that he had omitted to bring away from his mother's house a few bottles of rare and costly wine which he was not disposed to abandon to her use.

Returning, therefore, he for the last time, as he supposed, opened the hall door with his key and hurried up the stairs.

As he placed his foot on the first landing, he was suddenly confronted by the housekeeper, who with quick coming sobs issued from the room in which he had parted with his heart-broken mother.

"Oh, Mr. Robert," she gasped, "your mother, your poor mother! In there—"

"She wants to see me, does she?" he interrupted harshly. "Ha! ha! I thought she would come round."

Pushing the weeping housekeeper aside, he abruptly entered the dining-room, only to look upon a scene that chilled even his stolid heart.

Stretched upon the lounge, her pale face face turned upwards, her hands folded calmly upon her breast, lay his mother.

He needed no second glance to assure him that she was gone from earth, that she whose tender care and love he had requited with studied insult, was DEAD!

He stood looking down upon her with fixed, stony gaze, while the sobbing housekeeper told him how, soon after he had left the house that morning, she had gone into the breakfast-room, and had found her mistress prostrate upon the floor, with the life-blood slowly welling from her lips.

Medical assistance had been speedily obtained, but all in vain; her work was finished, and her father had called her home.

At length Robert Baldwin tore himself from the sight which fascinated while yet it awed him, and locked himself in his own room, where we will leave him, while we look upon more congenial scenes.

Again we enter Dick Martin's home, which, gazing upon it from without, seems not to have changed since last we saw it. Within doors, however, very different is the aspect from its former neatness.

Boxes, trunks, furniture, were piled in the halls ready for removal; one apartment alone remained untouched as yet,—the family sitting-room.

Here then, after their return from Mrs. Baldwin's funeral, our friends were gathered, discussing their plans for the future with hope and cheerfulness.

Dick had been peculiarly fortunate in meeting with a prompt purchaser for his house, and with the eight thousand dollars obtained from the sale, his course lay clear clear before him.

A leap of two years, and again we look in upon them in their still comparatively new home.

'Tis a beautiful spot in summer, but dreary and chill as it is now, on this stormy winter's night of our reunion with our friends, dreary and chill without, but bright and cheerful within their home.

We find another added to the family circle since last we joined it,—a fair young girl, Dick Martin's wife.

The sweet face is lighted up with a smile as she hears his footsteps approaching, and springing towards him, assists him to disencumber his manly form of its heavy wrappings.

"Why, Dick," she exclaimed, "it must be snowing again, is it not? Your coat is almost white."

"Yes," was the reply. "This is a second edition of yesterday's storm. The snow is deep enough now for all ordinary occasions, but I fear it will be much deeper yet. It is growing bitterly cold, too. I am thankful I have such a dear home to creep into to-night."

Supper over, and Lucy (now fast verging upon womanhood), having taken little Charlie to seek his peaceful pillow, Dick took up a book to read aloud, as was his wont, to his wife and mother, while they plied their busy needles.

The wind howled and shrieked without, but within that cottage home all was cheerful comfort.

"Listen!" exclaimed Martin, laying aside his book as he spoke; "I thought I heard something."

"Heard something? What, and where?"

"I thought I heard a dull noise, like something falling outside." He waited a few moments longer, then, hearing nothing further, resumed his book,—only, however, to cast it from him again.

"I *did* hear it groan then! I cannot be mistaken. Some one must be lost or perishing in this bitter storm."

He hastily threw on his overcoat and cap, and the two women accompanied him to the door, as he opened it and paused there an instant, striving in vain to look out into the darkness.

Stepping down into the path, he tripped over some object which lay concealed beneath the snow.

In shape and size it presented the appearance of a log, but this he well knew it could not be, and so he busily removed its white covering.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed, "it is a man!" To raise the prostrate form in his arms, and bear it into the house, was but the work of a moment.

"He is insensible, but not yet dead; perhaps we can revive him. That dull noise I heard was doubtless when he fell at the door. Poor fellow! he must have lost his way, and see how thin and scanty his clothing is. What is it, mother?" he added, quickly, as, with a low cry she started back from the sofa.

"Look, look!" and Mrs. Martin pointed to the sufferer's face.

"Robert Baldwin! Oh, mother, how changed! And how came he here, and thus meanly clad?"

During the greater part of an hour his untiring efforts to restore the unconscious man to animation were fruitless, but at length, as they were about to desist in despair of success, his breast heaved, and then his eyes opened and wandered vacantly around.

"Where am I?" he murmured.

"Among friends. Here, here is my house, cousin Robert," said Dick, gently.

Baldwin started, gazed earnestly in Dick's pitying face, then closed his eyes.

"Yes, yes, your house," he murmured, "I was seeking for you."

A few moments of silence, and then he spoke again, addressing the man he had wronged.

"Dick Martin, I am dying: I have been a great sinner, a terrible sinner, and I believe I should have died without repenting of my evil course, had I not squandered away all my fortune. Then, when I was a beggar, the men who had called themselves my friends, deserted me. That gave me time to reflect, and God knows I have repented me of my sins, most truly and sincerely."

The dying man paused to recover strength, and then proceeded in a low, faltering voice.

"I have been seeking you out for months. I determined to ask you to take me as one of your workmen, for I knew that you were too noble to refuse me, even though I had so foully wronged you—for, Dick, you were right, Will Braddon was only a tool, my tool, as were his companions. Can you forgive me, Dick?"

"From my heart I do forgive you, Robert."

"Bless you, bless you! Where is your hand, Dick? I cannot see you. Ah! there is my poor injured mother, she forgives, too, she is smiling upon me—'As—ye sow—so shall ye reap.'"

And while the words yet lingered upon his lips, a shudder passed over his emaciated form; an instant more, and the "prodigal son" had returned to his Father's mansion, amidst the rejoicings of the angels over "one sinner saved."

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

ASSASSINATION OF COL. JAMES FISK, JR.—PARTICULARS OF THE TRAGEDY.

Col. James Fisk, Jr., was shot by Edward Stokes, at the Grand Central Hotel, New York, at 4.20 P. M. on the 6th instant. The following are the circumstances: At 4.30 P. M. a carriage stopped at the entrance of the Grand Central Hotel, containing Fisk and a companion. The former alighted and entered the hotel for the purpose of proceeding to a room, and as he ascended the first step, Stokes came out of an adjoining passageway, and unperceived by Fisk, unbuttoning his coat, drew a revolver, and rapidly discharged three shots at Fisk. The first lodged in Fisk's shoulder, the second whistled by his head, and the third, with more fatal direction, struck him in the abdomen, inflicting a mortal wound. Fisk at once staggered and fell, while Stokes, casting a look of hatred on his prostrate form, said in a savage tone: "I have done for the —— of a ——this time." Fisk evidently recognized his assailant before falling, but made no remark. Immediately after the shots were fired, the hotel employes rushed to the scene, and while some cared for the wounded man, others seized Stokes, who, seeing that escape was impossible, made no resistance, and was promptly handed over to the police. Fisk was quietly conveyed to his room, where the surgeon of the hotel was soon in attendance upon him. Meanwhile telegraphic messages were sent for further surgical aid and for the friends of Fisk. The scene at the hotel after the shooting was one of extraordinary excitement. The crowds coming from the various theatrical matinees, hearing of the affair, thronged the corridors of the hotel, eagerly discussing the event, and making inquiries about the particulars of the outrage. The officers who arrested Stokes took him to the Fifteenth Precinct Station-house, where he was lodged in a cell. The news of the shooting was spread over the city, and produced intense excitement.

On the evening of the 6th, many of Fisk's acquaintances and friends visited the hotel, among them Tweed and Jay Gould. Fisk was calm and collected, and able to converse. About 9 o'clock P. M. the coroner heard his statement as to the shooting. At 9.30 he was engaged with his lawyers in making his will.

THE DEATH OF FISK.

About 1.30 the next morning Fisk fell into a profound slumber upon his side, breathing heavily. His face was pale, but before 6 A. M. had not any alarming expression, only around the eyes were dusky rings, that seemed to show some little danger. At 6 o'clock the first ominous change appeared in the patient. He grew a little restless, his face had greater pallor, and his breathing was less easy and regular. Dr. Fisher found his pulse was more rapid, very nearly 100. At 6.30 Fisk said something in a broken tone, and then closed his eyes. This change in his face had become more apparent, the pallor was more deathlike, and his pulse was over 100. At 7 o'clock it was announced that he was fast sinking, his pulse being at 130. Shortly after, Mrs. Fisk, his wife, and Mr. Morse, his father-in-law, arrived, and went to the bedside of the sufferer. Mrs. Fisk was greatly agitated, and the scene was the most heart-rending that had yet taken place, and those present could not contain their emotion. At 7.30 his friends, collected in the ante-room, had been joined by others, one by one, who asked anxiously after the condition of Fisk. Lawyer Sherman and Jay Gould stood near, the latter completely overcome. The doctors were appealed to by his wife, to give some little hope, but they gently indicated that they dared not say there was any chance of life. Fisk was not much moved at the moments when he was cognizant of his surroundings, but seemed never deserted by the coolness and fortitude he displayed when first shot. As the morning advanced, his pulse still grew alarming, and he became more and more feverish and exhausted. The morphine which had been given him in large quantities, only kept him from terrible agony, and as it was, his tortures were excruciating. At 8 A. M. there was little change. At 8.30 the doctors consulted again, and at 9 o'clock the suppressed excitement about his bed was almost too intense to bear. At 9.30 a few were permitted to go to his bedside. The length of his life now depended on his being kept as quiet as possible. There was by this time a good deal of going to and fro in the sick man's chamber. Fisk thanked his friends amply for coming. The rapidity of his decline showed itself more strongly than ever before. At ten A. M. there was an eager and hushed whispering, as it was told in every ear that the end was surely drawing near. At 10.30 he lay, scarcely knowing that there was any ministering to him. He looked at the opposite wall and noticed no one, and fifteen minutes later he breathed his last.

HOW THE NEWS WAS RECEIVED.

All night the Erie employes of all grades had thronged the corridors adjoining Fisk's room. Jay Gould was in attendance from an early hour that morning. His face, while there was yet a hope that his friend might recover, wore its usual calm expression. No sooner had Fisk expired, however, than Gould's fortitude gave way, and his grief found vent in tears. The news of Fisk's death spread rapidly, and everywhere produced a profound sensation and regret. From an early hour, the hotel was crowded with people, eagerly seeking information as to the state of Fisk and the chances of his recovery, but, when the news of his death spread over the city, crowds hurried to the hotel, and the corridors became almost impassable. No unkind word was heard of the dead. On the contrary, many tongues recounted numerous acts of kindness the deceased had performed. After the death had been announced numbers of his friends were allowed to view the body, but the general public were not admitted. At two P. M. the body was taken to Fisk's late residence, No. 313 West Twenty-third street.

AN IMMENSE FUNERAL.

The next morning, Jan. 8, the body was taken, about eleven o'clock, into the large vestibule of the Erie railway office, on the second floor, the ceiling and walls of which are brilliant with gay Pompeidia frescoes. A portrait of Fisk had been placed at the head of the room, draped with the American flag, and that of the Ninth regiment, of which he was colonel. These were mingled with crape, and crape was plentifully entwined upon the gallery railing, and hung from the chandeliers to the gas fixtures. Long streams of individuals poured in to contemplate the features of the murdered man. The face was pale, but full as in life. The hair was parted nearly in the middle according to his custom, and his moustache was waxed at the ends and stood out in long points. The body was in uniform. The rosewood catafalque was profusely decorated with flowers and with an American flag, and Fisk's regimental sword, sash and hat. Upon the plate was "James Fisk, Jr., died Jan. 7, 1872, aged 37 years." A guard of honor from the Ninth regiment, surrounded the coffin, other members acted as coffin supporters and pall bearers, and the regiment at large stood in the street, waiting to escort their recent commander to the railway station. With them were the officers of the division to which it belonged, who were to act as mourners.

The crowd in the street was dense, the windows for a long distance were filled with heads, and many housetops were filled with spectators. But a small portion of those desiring to see the body obtained admission on account of the defective facilities for quick ingress and egress. At one o'clock the doors were closed, and in the presence of the wife and mother of deceased, of his sister, Mrs. Colonel Hooker, of the Erie railroad directors and clerks, and of the officers of the Ninth regiment, the Episcopal burial service and prayers were read by Chaplain Flagg, of the regiment. He delivered no address, but simply remarked that the remainder of the service would follow at Brattleboro', Vt., where the interment was to take place.

The lid of the casket was then closed, and the funeral procession moved toward the railway depot, followed by an enormous crowd. Four black horses drew the hearse, and in the line was the black horse recently ridden by Fisk at the head of his regiment. It was caparisoned and led by a groom. First marched the police, then the Ninth regiment, then the directors and clerks of the Erie railway, and then the hearse and pall bearers. The horse followed, and was succeeded by seventy of the veteran corps of the Ninth, by the brigade and division officers, and by two lines of mourning carriages. The train left at three. The cars were all draped with crape. The late military boots of Fisk were in the stirrups of his horse, with the toes turned backward. The Erie railway directors met that morning and passed resolutions of regret at the untimely death of Mr. Fisk. One of the resolutions was: "That we will cherish forever the memory of our associate for his untiring efforts to make the railway of this company a useful servant of the public, for which it was created, for his remarkable executive ability, for his unselfish devotion to his friends, for his unostentatious but munificent charities, and for his generous and manly nature which endeared him to his associates, and to all the officers and employes of the company." Another: "That we offer our respectful condolence to the widow and family of the deceased, assuring them of our profound sympathy with them in their loss, and of our confident belief that when the truth respecting his administration of the affairs of this company shall be fully known, the memory of our departed friend will be vindicated, and the cloud of calumny that has surrounded his name will be forever dispersed."

HIS WILL.

The following are the provisions of Fisk's will:—Mrs. Hooker, his sister, receives $100,000 in Narragansett Steamship Company's shares; his father and mother receive $3,000 a year; to each of the two Misses Morse he gives $2,000 a year; to the Ninth Regiment, $11,000 (this gift was made a week ago, but was legalized last night;) to his wife he bequeaths the balance of his property, of all kinds; to Jay Gould, for whom he entertained the warmest and most disinterested friendship, he leaves his personal effects, and entrusts to him "the labor of love" (so it is called in the will) of carrying out all of his (Fisk's) projects in regard to public improvements. Mrs. Fisk inherits all her husband's shares in the Erie Railroad.

CAUSE OF THE TRAGEDY.

The day after the murder Stokes was taken to the Tombs and placed in cell No. 15. His counsel were with him, as also his brothers. He says he did the deed in a state of frenzy.

A feud had long existed between the two men, growing partly out of the alleged fact that Fisk had defrauded Stokes out of a large amount of money in business transactions, and partly out of their relations to a Miss Mansfield; and the matter of difference has long been pending in the courts, without as yet reaching a decision. It is stated that Fisk on Saturday last obtained a bench warrant for the arrest of Stokes, on the charge of attempt to black-mail; and it is believed that the latter, on learning this fact, was so enraged that he immediately formed the resolve to kill Fisk, and lay in wait at the hotel for that purpose.

THE INQUEST.

The inquest upon Fisk terminated on Tuesday evening, Jan. 9. The jury were out three hours. Mr. Opdyke, the foreman, read a verdict charging Stokes with the murder. Stokes's countenance did not change on hearing it. Coroner Young then, as customary, asked Stokes his name, age, birthplace, residence and occupation. Stokes said that his name was Edward S.; his age, thirty; his birthplace, Philadelphia; his residence, the Hoffman house, in this city, and his occupation that of a broker. To a demand whether he had anything to say relative to the charge against him, he replied that his counsel, John McKeon, John Graham and the two Messrs. Bartlett, had advised him to decline answering any further questions at present. He signed the paper containing the above replies with a bold hand, and without nervousness. The coroner then committed him to the Tombs, to await the action of the grand jury.

STOKES'S QUARTERS AT THE TOMBS.

Stokes has made himself very comfortable in the Tombs. He has papered the walls of his cell handsomely, and has introduced a black walnut bedstead and other furniture, together with a luxurious bed. He claimed that he did not take quite sufficient exercise during the day to render a prison mattress comfortable.

BURIAL OF FISK.

The ball which had killed Fisk was found in one of his thighs. It had passed downward through the intestines, and cut them badly. They were found suffused with blood on the post-mortem examination. He was interred Jan. 9, in a picturesque cemetery near Brattleboro', Vermont, in presence of an immense crowd of people, who had come in sleighs for many miles around. The Rev. Mr. Jenkins, of the place, prayed for half an hour, and Chaplain Flagg, of the Ninth Regiment, delivered a short laudatory discourse upon the deceased. Fisk's brain weighed fifty-eight ounces, and his heart sixteen ounces. The body was in a remarkable state of health, and he might, with proper care, have lived to over a hundred.

COMMENTS OF THE PRESS.

The Philadelphia Ledger says of the murder, that "The shooting was a deliberate and cowardly piece of assassination. There was no collision between Fisk and Stokes, who shot him—no blow struck, or hot words that excite hot blood, but a deliberate lying in wait by a man armed for murder, upon an unsuspecting, if not an unoffending man. This is among the basest of all the crimes classed as homicide.

"Having said this much as to the murder, it is not our purpose to pursue the custom of speaking only what is good of the dead, to the extent of ignoring the fact that Fisk has been the author of a great deal of mischief in this country, and especially in the city and state of New York. He is one of the marked instances in which the evil he has done lived not only whilst he lived, but continues to live after him. He was a man of restless activity and remarkable energy, with something like ambition among his mental qualities. But these traits, which sometimes make great and useful men of those who possess them (if they have other good qualities,) were unfortunately subordinated in Fisk to his other more formidable traits of reckless presumption, unscrupulous dealing, and apparently shameless disregard of law and of all moral or honorable restraint. These qualities degraded what might have otherwise been a wholesome ambition, into a low craving for notoriety, no matter by what means, creditable or discreditable. He seems to have been quite as well satisfied and complacent over the public comments upon his share in the infamous proceedings of the "Erie Ring," and his base morals, as he was with any remarks about his free lines of omnibusses, his improved ferries, or his gorgeous steamboats. It was an unfortunate day for him, as well as for New York, and for the character of this country abroad, when his peculiar characteristics attracted the notice of the crafty, avaricious and rich stock gamblers and railway manipulators in New York. Fisk, who was a native of one of the New England states (Vermont, we think,) had been a peddlar of silks and notions through an extensive range of the New England country, and had got to be a master hand in that business and the proprietor of quite a caravan of peddlar's wagons. He prospered so that he enlarged his business in Boston, and ultimately settled in New York city. He was not, however, so successful as a settled merchant as he was when he was a master peddlar; but in New York he became acquainted with Gould and Tweed and others, to whom the traits we have mentioned were a great recommendation. They had many uses for just such a man, and they did use him, and he used them. Since that time his career has been so notorious as to leave no necessity for reciting the particulars. Even if there were such necessity, we should enter upon the task with great reluctance.

"The demoralizing effects of his course, however, will continue to be felt for a long time to come. He came very near demonstrating that a man may be utterly, enormously and shamelessly dishonest, and yet be, as the world goes, prosperous, courted, flattered, and surrounded by devoted friends. He came very near demonstrating that if a man casts aside all moral scruple, all obligations of honor, all restraints of decency, and pursues a reckless, aggressive, insolent warfare against the rights of other men and the general interests of society, he can *command* support and success, and even something approaching to admiration. He came very near demonstrating that a man can violate all law in the city and State of New York, and yet defy all the Courts and all the authorities, and be amenable to no law. He came very near demonstrating that nothing in life—no property, and no man and no woman—could be safe from such a man if he once looked upon the object with an avaricious eye or a covetous appetite. These are dangerous powers or influences, or whatever they may be called, and the continued and successful exercise of them by Fisk and his confederates, was producing a harvest of baneful results to American society. No one, therefore, can pretend to regret that these dangerous powers, so far as they were set in motion or controlled by Fisk, have passed away; though no person properly constituted, can fail to condemn with the strongest emphasis the cowardly murder which brought his life to a close."

FACTS IN THE LIFE OF THE ASSASSIN.

Edward S. Stokes was born in Philadelphia in 1841, and when quite young went to New York city with his parents. His father was the principal member of the firm of Stokes & Budlong. Stokes was always, in early life, fond of athletic sports, and, until lately, was considered a good gymnast by those who knew him best. He was educated at the High School, in Philadelphia, and received a first-class English and Latin education. He was quick to learn, and very proficient in his studies. He was with his father's firm at an early age, and manifested great energy and business tact. He had one great fault, however. His blood was hot, and being of a nervous, sanguine temperament, he was liable at any moment to break out when he deemed himself imposed upon or outraged. He has always been sensitive to an insult and quick to resent an injury. Stokes is five feet nine inches high, and weighs about one hundred and forty pounds. He is slightly built, but is very wiry and active on his feet. In conversation he talks quickly and to the point, and hurries his affairs through as rapidly as possible. He is of fine personal appearance, of a dark complexion, with piercing black eyes and regular features. His hair, which was jet black a couple of years ago, is now partly gray, and were it not for his active movements he would pass for a man of forty-five years. Mr. Stokes married a lady of good family some ten years ago, and they now have an interesting daughter.

In June of last year, Mrs. Stokes, who was in bad health, visited Europe to seek some benefit from the mineral springs of Central Germany, and when last heard from, as late as December 3d, was in Paris.

The family, while in New York, had an elegant suit of apartments at the Worth House, corner of Fifth avenue and Twenty-sixth street. These apartments were furnished with every article of luxury and refinement that taste could devise or money could buy. Through his intimacy with Helen Josephine Mansfield he has wrought out an inevitable name and shame, and repeated, to his own remorse, an oft-taught lesson.

ALEXIS IN ST. LOUIS.

Of course the ball and banquet at the Southern Hotel on the night of Jan. 8, in honor of the Grand Duke Alexis, eclipsed everything of the kind ever witnessed in St. Louis. The attendance of prominent citizens was very large, and the toilettes of the ladies exceedingly rich and elaborate. The decorations were elegant and appropriate, and the banquet sumptuous. Altogether it was the most brilliant affair in the annals of the city.

Alexis has not arrived yet at the buffalo region. A hunting camp has been established, however, near the Republican river as a basis for the operations of the Duke and Sheridan. Buffalo and other game are reported plentiful, and it is expected that nearly a thousand Indians will be collected there.

DEATH OF MAJOR GENERAL HALLECK.

LOUISVILLE, January 9.—Major General H. W. Halleck died at his residence in this city to-night, of congestion of the brain, superinduced by disease of the liver, with which he had been afflicted for some time.

THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION.

The National Republican Convention has been called to meet in Philadelphia on the fifth of June next.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS.

Brigham Young refuses to be interviewed.

Alexis has an income of $25,000 a year.

It is said that the father of James Fisk, recently assassinated, has gone crazy over the fate of his son.

The Prince of Wales went out walking on Monday, Jan. 8, for the first time since his recent severe illness.

Almost every city in Italy is infected with small-pox. It is also very bad in England.

The weather was colder in Paris during December than at any time since 1778.

On Friday, Jan. 5, in London, Joseph Gillott, the celebrated steel pen inventor and manufacturer, died.

Mrs. Fair, under sentence of death at San Francisco, is in excellent health, and is confident that she will never be hanged.

A passenger on one of the New York ferry boats lately sneezed himself overboard.

Twelve brigands recently arrested a Sicilian farmer, near Messina, and at midnight took him to his own brother's house, which they desired to plunder. He was to knock at the door and entice his brother to open. But, instead of doing that, he, when he knocked, said softly: "Don't open—brigands—they will kill you." He obeyed, and the brigands killed their prisoner, in a rage, and fired the town. Brother had sacrificed his life for brother.

THE Times of India, in its overland summary, says: "Famine continues its ravages in Persia, and the extent of it will never fully be known. Much as we know of the misery this wide-spread, long-continued famine has wrought, it is strange that we hear nothing of any organized and sustained effort for alleviation being made by the Persian Governments. The starving people are left to look after themselves; such as can leave the country do so; such as cannot, must die, unless relief from some unexpected quarter reaches them. As is usual, disease has appeared in the districts to complete what famine had begun."

A STRANGE PRESENTIMENT.

The Bangor, (Me.) Whig tells the following story: "An Augusta correspondent writes that Charles Berry, a musician residing in that city, played at a ball at Kendall's Mills, and after the ball retired to rest as usual, but was restless and unable to sleep, and a sensation of dread of something wrong took hold of his mind. He strove to shake it off, and courted sleep in vain. So strong did his uneasiness become, that he at length arose and took the first train for Augusta, and immediately went to his home, where he found his wife, and little son of four years of age, both nearly suffocated from coal gas. It was a long time before they could be revived. Had he been absent an hour longer, they would doubtless have both been dead."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ At a county fair in Arkansas a premium is offered for the handsomest man.

☞ The latest ballad is, "Bury your dog in the garden: it will make your grapevine grow."

☞ An Evansville schoolboy defined a lady to be "a growed-up girl who doesn't cuss nor swear."

☞ A Kentucky girl says when she dies she wishes to have tobacco planted over her grave, that the weed nourished by her dust may be chewed by her bereaved lovers. There is poetry in the idea.

☞ A Wisconsin church voted a girl a gold ring for being so pretty.

☞ Boston has a tobacco chewer who recently, in a fit of absent-mindedness, masticated a $5 bill.

☞ Surprise parties are now voted vulgar.

☞ An Indiana editor is represented as "squealing back a squawk of soul-satisfied bliss."

☞ A fifth avenue belle boasts having received twenty baskets of flowers, and three hundred calls on New Year's Day, in New York.

☞ About a year ago a deaf and dumb couple in New Jersey were married. Lately the wife gave birth to a child, and can now both hear and speak.

☞ A man has been fined five dollars and costs, at Seymour, Indiana, for "merely attempting to hang a boy."

☞ The most definite description a Down-East woman could give of her lost baby was, "kinder fat, with a calico dress on."

☞ Holland has just commenced to eat mince pies.

☞ A fellow who was brought into the police court with two black eyes, after a night of it, explained that his injuries were the result of spiritual rappings.

☞ A resident of Newport, R. I., claims to be the owner of a tom-cat whose weight is thirty pounds. Thomas is said to thrive on flour dough, of which he devours fabulous quantities.

☞ A Chinaman, who had his nose bit off in a fight in San Francisco, had it carefully packed and sent back home, to show his friends one of the American customs.

☞ The practise of making a holiday gift of a year's subscription to a newspaper is rapidly increasing.

☞ A western New York restaurant provides "cooked vitals" cheap.

I am dying, Katrin, dying!
What was fading now grows bright;
Change o'er all is sweetly lying—
Angels I shall see to-night!
I am dying, Katrin, dying!
And I feel—a Heavenly splash—
I am dying, Katrin, dying!
I am dying my moustache!

☞ The best woman's rights item we have seen comes from France. A very beautiful lady of the Die Vernon type, living in Boulogne, sent a challenge to the publisher of a humorous journal, who had "twice concerned himself with her private affairs." A formal acceptance of the duel was returned, the choice of arms was waived, but a decided preference for those of the lady herself was expressed. Reconciliation followed, and the wedding trip is to the United States.

☞ The French Minister of War has decided that in future white or dappled gray horses shall not be employed in military service; the experience of the late war having proved that the animals of those colors offer an excellent mark for the enemy's artillery. White horses being regarded by the veterinary profession as lymphatic, were condemned during the siege as unfit for human consumption.

☞ A man having fallen into a slough, an Irishman standing by called to another for assistance. The latter, who was busily engaged in cutting a log, leisurely inquired, "how deep is he in?" "Up to his ankles." "Then there is plenty of time." "No, there is not," replied the first; "I forgot to tell you he's in head first."

☞ The wife of a prominent New Yorker recently appeared at a ball with a necklace, earrings and bracelets composed of ten and twenty-dollar gold pieces, fresh from the mint.

☞ The following dialogue is said to have taken place in a school near Salisbury, England: "Now, then, the first boy of the grammar class stand up!" First boy stands up, blushing. "Here I be, zir." Examiner—"Well, my good boy, can you tell me what vowels are?" First boy—"Vowels, zir? Een, of course I can." Examiner—"Tell me, then, what are vowels?" First boy, grinning at the simplicity of the question—"Vowls, zir? Why, vowls be chickens!"

☞ How to put money in your purse—open your pocket-book, take a greenback between your thumb and finger, and lay it right in.

☞ The Paris Figaro tells a story of a court crier who took great pride in a collection of knives which had served for the purpose of assassination. He used them at the table, the knives of parricides being used only for guests of distinction.

☞ Cream-colored cats are in great demand for stylish home circles.

☞ A New York belle accidentally tore off a piece from her photograph of the Grand Duke for a cigar-light for her brother. Her condition is critical.

☞ There is a cat in Daviess county, Indiana, which has the chills-and-fever as regularly as any of the rest of the family.

☞ The Louisville Courier Journal says: "The Pittsburg Gazette has a long thing headed: 'Cheap Gas for the People.' Isn't the Gazette a little early with its prospectus?"

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The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 2100 head, and sold at 7½@8½c. 250 Cows brought $40@65 ₩ head. Sheep—13,000 head were disposed of at 6@7c. ₩ lb. 3100 Hogs sold at $7@7,50 ₩ 100 lbs net.

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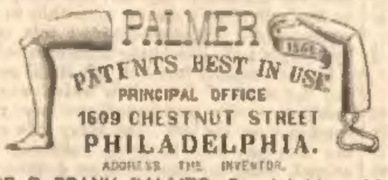

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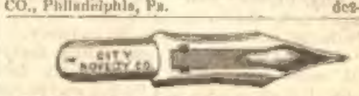

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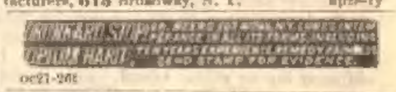

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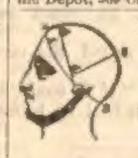

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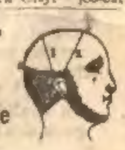

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WIT AND HUMOR.

A SOLDIER'S YARN.

Our evenings are cool, and when the day's march has not been too fatiguing, the soldiers gather round a cedar-wood camp fire, and, in their way, indulge in camp gossip. I listened to a discussion last evening on the comparative merits, or rather demerits, of the various military posts at which they had seen service.

"Which was the coldest post?"

A candidate from Ronse's Point presented its claims; who was distanced by another from Detroit, who was soon ignominiously routed by a cavalryman who had wintered at Pembina.

"Which was the hottest post?" was logically and meteorologically the next question.

Tampa Bay, Key West, and Point Isabel were all warmly advocated; but the discussion was thoroughly—indeed, one might say hermetically—closed by a three-chevroned veteran, who, with a Homeric wave of the hand, imposed silence.

"All were attentive to the warlike man,
When rising from his couch he thus began:"

"Boys, did any of you ever hear of Fort Yuma?" Not one of them.

"Well, Fort Yuma is clear over beyond Arizona, near the Gulf of California, where nothing grows, nor flies nor runs. It's the hottest post, not only in the United States, but in creation, and I'll prove it to you. You see, I was ordered there six years ago, and hadn't been there two weeks, in the month of August, when two corporals died. They had been there ever since the post was a post—in old Hoffman's time. Well, they both died, and where do you think they went?"

No one could possibly imagine.

"Why, I'll tell you. They both went straight to h—ll!"

Profound astonishment in the auditory.

"Yes, but they hadn't been gone forty-eight hours—hardly time to have their descriptive list examined, and be put on fatigue duty down below—when one night the hospital steward was waked up in a hurry, and there he saw the two corporals.

"'What do you want?' said he—you know them hospital stewards are always surprised at a soldier's ever wanting anything. 'What do you want?' says he.

"'We want our blankets,' says they.

"After that you needn't talk to me about any post being hotter than Yuma."

The auditory separated in silence.

A HOSS STABLE.

The Hon. Benjamin Tappan, once a Senator from Ohio, was on the bench when the Buckeye State was admitted into the Union. He was famous in his time for being very ugly, very talented, and very cross-eyed, crabbed, and sarcastic. On one occasion he was holding court in the wilderness, where one log cabin had to be used for court-house, tavern and bar-room. The stable near by was used pro tem. for jail. The judge had just given some malefactors a very severe sentence, when a rough backwoodsman who had been practising at the other bar, exclaimed:

"That's right; give 'em thunder, old gimlet eyes."

"Who is that?" screamed the irate and indignant Judge.

"It's this old hoss," answered the pioneer, giving his breast an approving slap.

"Mr. Sheriff," retorted Tappan, "put that old hoss in the stable, and keep him a week on bread and water."

A NEW SIGNAL SYSTEM.

The War Department, in addition to its weather signal system, is about to establish an electric social system of storm signals in all the larger cities of the country, by which every married man who is on the magnetic belt can, by watching the signals on his chimney top or ridge board, tell just the moment when it will be safe for him to leave port (or champagne) for home. A black flag flying will signify "cross as a bear—typhoon approaching." A white flag—"everything is lovely; she is asleep." A red flag, with white centre—"look out for squalls; baby just spanked;" while a white flag with a red centre, indicates simply "cautionary" measures on the part of the "old man," who can go home under full sail, but should reef his boots and douse the binnacle lamp before going up stairs.—*Titusville Herald.*

HIS LUGGAGE.

"Beg yah pardon! but which are the coaches for Montreal?" said a newly-arrived Briton to the baggage-master of one of the Northern railways.

"First car forrad," said the active attache of the road. "Baggage checked, sir?"

"Baggage? Haw! you mean my luggage. Haven't any, except what I have on, and that is all checked; plaid coat and trowsers, check shirt, and cross-bar scarf," and he ambled into the car. "A man as travels on the square," as the railway official remarked to a listening comrade.—*Com. Bulletin.*

When Judge Howell, of Rhode Island, was at the bar, Mr. Burgess, to play a joke, wrote on the lining of his hat, *vacuum caput* (empty head.) The hat circulated about exciting a smile on every countenance, except that of the owner, who deliberately took it up, and repeated the words, and, well knowing the author, addressed the court as follows: "May it please the court, I ask your Honor's protection" (holding up his hat), "for," said he, "I find that Brother Burgess has writt'n his name in my hat, and I have reason to believe he intends to make off with it."

"Look here, stranger, that's my wife you're dancing with." Well, what of it?" said Rackensack. "Why this, you dance with her again and I'll blow the top of your head of!" "Now, look here," said Rackensack cooly, "do you see that umbrella setting there?" "Well, s'pose I do?" "Well, you handle that umbrella—you touch that umbrella; you even look at that umbrella, and I'll ram it down your throat, and I'll—I'll spread it."

An ignorant Irishman, seeing persons reading with spectacles, went to buy a pair to enable himself to read. He tried several *p*, and told the merchant he could not read with any of them.

"Can you read at all?" asked the merchant.

"No," was the reply: "if I could, do you think I would be such a fool as to buy spectacles?"

At a menagerie in Indianapolis a small lioness escaped from her cage, and the chief-of-police went to the top of the centre-pole in five minutes. He is reported now as saying that he went up there just for fun, to decide a bet. Besides that, he says he didn't know the lioness was out of her cage, and he didn't go up the pole any way.

When Pitcher was haranguing about his father having been a poor man—his father was a cooper, etc.—Marshall said "that the gentleman's father was a poor man, perhaps he had been a cooper, but if he was he had put a mighty poor head to one of his whiskey barrels."

"Poor thing," observed a tender-hearted Bridgeport lady, in speaking of the death of a young friend, "she had just got a forty dollar set of furs, and beauties they were, but she don't need such things now." What do you suppose she meant by that?

SOUL FOR SOUL.

BY FLORENCE MARRYAT.

O eyes, that pierce me through and through,
And draw my very soul away,
Your sunshine may not fill my life,
Nor turn my darkness into day.
Dear eyes, you are not made for me—
Must I from your enchantments flee?

O voice, whose cadence, rich and low,
Stirs my frail being to its core:
Whose accents thrill my soul with hope,
Which reason quenches evermore;
Dear voice, I dare not love thy tone—
Thou never canst be mine alone.

O hand, that lies so warm in mine,
Whose hold is firm as hold of death,
I shriek from thine assuring clasp,
Although it speaks of love and faith.
Dear hand, that touch is not for me;
Unloose thine hold—let me go free.

O lips, that bent to greet my own,
And seal them with a promise true,
Can pledge so sacred have been sin?
Must I too bid farewell to you?
Dear lips, for this world 'twere too sweet
That you and I should often meet.

O heart, that understands so well
All that my heart longs to disclose,
Upon that faithful resting-place
This wearied head will ne'er repose.
Dear heart, how gladly would I bear
One half the griefs that rankle there!

O soul, that sprung to meet my own
As though it recognized its lot,
Must my soul's portals close on thee?
Could it exist where thou wert not?
Ah, no! Fate here forbids control;
Take all, but leave me soul for soul!

Leaves from a Pocket Diary.

No. 9.

THE CONVICT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

We represented half a cart-wheel, capitally, so to speak, each fellow being a spoke, tires coming in well at the hub, which hub was a chatty, snappish little fire; and to carry the figure still farther, we were well tired by our day's labor.

Doles was in a state of exalted good humor, having had a run of luck that made the rest of us believe that there is something in the old saw of being born under a lucky planet, and so forth. He had discovered a "blow hole" up a precipitous cliff, and by bracing himself upon opposite ledges, and representing a human triangle to perfection, he had rattled out with his pick a pint of different sized bits of gold, some of which was quite pure. He had facetitiously invited the rest of us to assist in filling our pockets, but as by no miracle could two persons gain a foothold together, and he holding the position by right of discovery, it was evident that the invitation was a matter of form alone.

Some one had suggested blasting the cliff, and Doles soberly replied that after he had picked out the specimens, they might blast the entire pinnacle to their heart's content.

We saw the point of the joke, and made no more suggestions. Therefore, on this evening while the rest of us smoked speculatively, Doles hove out the whiffs in a manner to suggest a disturbed crater. Some one hinted that Doles made a picture of himself.

"An affront-is-piece, if you please," sending one eyebrow flying up to his hair, as he made the quick retort.

We took a pleased look at Doles, and then Charlie Brand spoke—

"You have been in Australia, Captain, I hear?"

"Was out in 18—"

"Did you go to work in the mines?"

"I went out mostly to see the country. Took passage on board the 'George F. Channing.' I had crossed over to Liverpool in the ship 'Trefoil,' my uncle being commander, and he and Captain Bateman of the 'George F. Channing,' being old friends, I thus secured a rare opportunity to make the passage to Australia in the best season of the year. The ship besides having a long list of convicts on board, also carried a posse of officers of different grades for the stations or colonies of that sea-girdled island.

The Australia of 18— was not the Australia of to-day by any means. Then, its entire population were the natives, the colonies of convicts, sent there by England and other countries, and the sturdy, courageous governor and staff of resolute men, who with the wild enterprise and ambition found in all ages in the possession of but few among the many, dreamed of wealth, or a famous future, built up only amid scenes of hazard and death. After a time tales of mineral wealth in this remote region drew a certain class of men there, who either had no homes or kindred, or disdained the restraints of such as they had.

Once out of the vessel and upon the land, there came first the deadly, sickening sensation that one might very nearly as well be out of the world; for no foot, however light and wary, could cross the broad, unstable bridge that stretched between Australia and the other continents; but away with moralizing as long as two-thirds of the world vote it trash.

For some weeks I made my home with Lieutenant Spaulding, who commanded a body of soldiers at barracks No. 4 and 5, station B, within a few miles of Melbourne. After that I began prospecting about the country, picking up experiences quite novel, if not very pleasing at times.

One day wandering off farther than usual, I found myself as the day drew to a close, casting a searching eye among the patches of brush to find a shepherd's locality where I might pass the night without travelling back to the station.

My glances at first careless became anxious, for the sun swung low, and a night in an Australian wood is not agreeable to nervous people. I had ascertained this much by being a trifle late in the bush once before.

I strode rapidly forward, not at all relishing the state of animation which was becoming rapidly manifested on my right hand and on my left. On every side came the frequent rush of some wakening wild animal, while the whole solemn distance for miles reverberated with wild melancholy voices. One could readily conceive this place as newly made and newly peopled with active creatures, and that each bird and beast essayed to give utterance to each separate voice. Startling croaks mingled with hoarse, discordant peals of demoniac laughter, such as never smote upon mortal ear, unless it has heard the wild laughing jackass give utterance to his superlative mirth. Now and then there was the green glare of fiery eyeballs in the bush, which might be from the orbs of some inoffensive but frightened animal, or it might be the sparks of fiendish light in the eyes of some lover of blood.

My ears at last were gladdened by hearing the familiar civilized yelp of a dog, answered by the continuous baying of another, more ferocious, which was, doubtless, chained in a kennel. These sounds told me that I was about emerging upon the precincts of a shepherd.

Directly I discovered a man leaning over the paling of his sheep-fold, and gazing cautiously and with perturbation in the direction from whence I soon discovered myself. As I drew nearer, however, his countenance settled into quiet, and he gave me a pleasant salutation. On asking him if I could tarry with him all night, after a moment's hesitation he replied in the affirmative, and unlocking his gate invited me to enter.

When he had lighted his fire and his candles, I dimly thought that I had seen him before; but where I could not recall. He put a junk of roast venison and a loaf of bread upon the table, and pouring out a bowl of strong coffee, requested me to share his evening meal.

Everything seemed so comfortable, and I had often dreamed pleasantly of pastoral life, that I could not forbear congratulating him upon upon the innocent happiness abounding in a pursuit like this, always, of course, allowing that the occupation is congenial to the taste.

"Young man," said my host, with a deep tone of serious gravity that surprised me, "how true it is that the world judges by the surface alone. *That* may be smooth and beautiful, while underneath lies a hell of wrecks, and rock, and dark abysses."

His vehemence of speech astonished me. His eyes lighted up with a scorching fire, the knotted veins swelled along his temples, a swift shudder ran along his nerves.

"I am nearly thirty," I interrupted.

"But you have experienced but little real trouble, young man. The smooth brow and merry glance bespeak it."

"Yet I have thought—"

"No doubt, no doubt, young man, you have *thought* that you knew something of trouble, but you do not. Look at me. Scarcely ten years your senior, yet see! a thread of silver lies side by side with every thread of black, and the furrows lie one upon the other across my face. This is what I get by being a convict."

I gave an involuntary start.

"That thrills along your muscles, does it? That simple fact of being a convict is nothing; but to be branded as one, is the awful part, when your soul is white with innocence."

"Can such things be?"

"It speaks well for your heart—that doubting tone and question—but little for your experience. Such things are permitted to be. I do not know why I speak thus freely to you, as if you might feel sympathy for a stranger."

"I have always felt a sympathy for the wronged or oppressed in any place and at all times," I warmly replied. "And it sometimes relieves the heart to tell its troubles. I am not a curious, but no interested listener."

"It does not matter—the history of one among thousands; and why should I tell it?"

"Pardon me if I have wounded you."

He nodded, and sat for sometime smoking in silence. And while I was thinking how terrible it must be to be banished from the world, as it were, while yet alive, he broke out fiercely:

"I hate the whole world with the bitterness of death. What had I done more than others, that I should be so persecuted."

"Ten years ago," he burst straight into his history, "I married a pretty little girl whom I loved and trusted as I did a God and Heaven. At the time I married her, she had another lover, who, although rich and in higher social position than myself, she thrust aside for me; and then as if the malignancy of a fiend developed itself within him, his persecutions began.

"First of all, he noticed my wife with as much familiarity as formerly, and in all public places paid her officious attentions, —which I could have sworn she shrank from; and she strove to calm my fierce resentment by cautioning me against giving him unnecessary offence, as he would not scruple to work us woe. After a time, she accepted his attentions with calm politeness; and I trembled at the power which I saw that he was gaining over her; yet at every mention of the subject, her distress was so great that I let the matter go on. Before a year I had lost my place, and my reputation had been blackened in such a manner that no remunerative position was open for me. My enemy played with a bold but covered hand. We were reduced to extreme poverty; still my wife did not complain—and I supposed her love unchanged. I struggled madly on; but on returning to our poor lodgings late one evening, my wife was gone, but had left me a note. Heaven! how my brain reels when I think of it. She had left for the Continent with McGouth, my inveterate enemy. While my blood seethed hotly at this dreadful blow, I was charged with a hideous crime, was proven guilty by hired witnesses, while I, friendless and penniless, could not defend myself. So I was sentenced to penal servitude in the Colonies here, my very name sunk in No. 98, and all ties sundered by a succession of crushing blows.

"But I know my enemy," he went on. "I could bear everything but my wife's unfaithfulness, for God is just, and the measure will be meted back to him. Five years ago I was offered a pardon and a situation on the governor's staff. I chose the bush; but whenever I learn that a convict ship is about arriving at Melbourne, I make the journey, for I expect to see him chained to the gang yet, and when my eyes rest upon McGouth his days are numbered, and I am sentenced for life.

"Does he think to silence retribution by using his money and influence to procure me a paltry pardon—*pardon!* when I had committed no crime? He has forged the thunderbolt that shall hurl him to perdition."

The man's agitation was frightful to look upon.

A slight noise in the rear of the apartment where we sat caused me to start.

"Only Karl, my herd's boy," he explained. "But slight protection do I have," he went on, "from the bushwhackers that infest this region."

"What is their object?"

"To murder and steal. They not unfrequently butcher the shepherd, drive off the sheep and slaughter them for their pelts, which find a ready sale with the vessels that touch here for that kind of merchandize."

On his speaking of going, if possible, to see every convict ship that entered port, I recalled where I had seen his face. It was when the "George F. Channing" had arrived at the wharf in Australia, he, foremost upon the quay, had scanned every face with devouring scrutiny.

"They have never disturbed you yet?" I questioned.

"Yes, once, not a week ago, three men, blackened like natives, attacked me outside the fold, and only by the remarkable prowess of Karl did I escape. I am well aware that they were convicts, a gang of whom escaped a month ago, and taking to the bush were not recaptured."

Here we were interrupted by the appearance of Karl, who was a most hideous dwarf.

"Master," said he, in a broad provincial accent, "there be noises to-night most uncommon. Let's have your ear outside. They moight be comin' again."

My host leaped to his feet and passed outside; but the ear that could distinguish anything uncommon among that Babel of sounds rioting through the night must indeed be well trained.

We all assumed a listening attitude.

"Kirr-r-it-te-yo-o-o-ou," called some wild animal to its mate. Said I to myself, "What a dismal noise."

"Kir, kir, kir-it-te-yo-u-u," came the answer.

"There be no animal hereabout, minister, that cries loike that. The bushers as has found the coast clear and no soldiers about, is calling the others up. Will ye loike to be sure, come then, and the dorgs will tell it."

With some curiosity, not unmixed with fear, I followed to the kennel. There were the dogs standing up stiffly with ears half raised and hair bristling along the spine. There was sufficient evidence that they had scented the danger. "Hasten, Karl," called his master, "loose them. Down, Prime!" as the brute ran growling towards me. "Now, stranger," he went on, "if I had a horse it should be at your disposal to try to escape; I have not, therefore you will defend yourself, if possible."

"Certainly, I shall not attempt to run."

We immediately prepared for defence; but, strangely enough, no attack came. An hour passed, and another. A visit to the dogs showed them silent and watchful. As midnight came on, wearied with my day's tramp, I threw myself upon the floor to rest while my host abated not his vigilance. I had become possessed of a strange idea. "Are these bushmen," I asked, "intending to run off the sheep, or are they in reality the hired assassins of a secret foe?"

What I had previously heard of Australian life did not lead me to suppose that the bush-whackers generally ranged in so small a company as my host represented. Again, it seemed as if they might have secured a part of the flock, if that had been their object. Obeying a sudden thought, I arose and noiselessly drew off my boots, signing my host to do the same. We then gazed steadily forth upon the night, but could distinguish nothing. I resumed my recumbent position.

Suddenly, as I was near falling into a doze, a fierce, mournful howl went up from the deep throat of the sheep dog.

My host involuntarily shivered, and crouched for a moment in the corner.

I moved softly, and whispered,

"Is there a cellar or cavity under this building?"

"Yes."

"Well, they're there. Is there a trap-door?"

He nodded again, listening intently.

"My God!" he ejaculated, under his breath, "we are trapped."

"Hist! where is the door? Let us crouch in a corner and let them enter the room."

"What if there are a dozen?"

"We have no choice, and can concoct no other plan."

We could say no more, for there was the soft lifting of the door already.

My host fired his rifle among them. The flash revealed them to us, also revealed us to them; but I had no time to count them. The struggle was hand-to-hand, with certainly two against one of us, and the imminent risk of our wounding each other in the darkness.

Yes, and I could hear more footsteps ascending the stairs. Just then a blue light flashed through the darkness like a meteor, and struck upon the opposite wall. The trap-door was then flopped back, one of the burly ruffians seized by the legs from below and jerked back into the vault, where a gurgling growl told that he had been pounced upon by one of the ferocious dogs; and another shared the same fate. Meanwhile, the shock head of the dwarf appeared above the floor, and he leaped into the melee like a mammoth toad; but strange enough the short fight was ended. The remaining ruffians charged for the door, and managed to escape. My host lay stretched out lifeless and bleeding upon the floor; my own arm had received a severe flesh wound, and the ferocious dogs had quieted the two villains whom Karl had jerked into the vault.

Everything proved as I suspected, that the ruffians were bound on assassinating the shepherd, rather than on stealing his herd.

The howls of the dwarf were frightful to hear, until feeling beneath his master's blouse, there was a faint pulsation perceptible; then every faculty was brought to bear to save him, if possible.

Before morning we had dressed no less than ten wounds of greater or less depth, but miraculously found that not one had penetrated his heart. I never saw a man more astonished than No. 98—I knew no other name by which to call him—when he returned to consciousness, and feebly realized that he still lived. He earnestly beseeched me to remain awhile at his hut, and my wounded arm interfering with my plans, I consented, and packed Karl off to the station for my traps and to inform Lieut. Spaulding of our adventure.

Spaulding kindly sent up a squad of soldiers to our vicinity, where they remained several days, but everything seeming to be quiet, they returned to the station. The next incident in the convict's life was much pleasanter than the one which we have related.

WHICH IS IT?

Mistress.—"By the way—Anna—Hannah—I'm not sure. Is your name 'Anna' or 'Hannah?'"

New English Cook (tartly.)—"Which my name is Anna, mum—Haich, Ha, Hen, Hen, Ha, Haich—'Anna'"—

Mistress (giving it up in despair.)—"Ah! Thank you."

Answers to Correspondents.

Additions to Clubs.—A correspondent asks "If additions can be made to clubs at the same rate." Yes.

To Contributors.—All manuscripts sent to us should have the price marked upon them if any is desired. Writers of no literary reputation should be satisfied at first if a good field is afforded them to display their talents and gain a name. We do not guarantee the safe return of manuscript, but endeavor to return it safely when desired, and when the requisite stamps are sent. Articles may be good of their kind, and not be suitable for our purposes. Experience and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their articles prompt attention.

Do not write to us asking whether you shall send on your manuscripts for examination—but send them on at once.

C. F. (Dayton, O.) writes: "Will the Post please give me information on the following points, and oblige a devoted reader of its columns? What is meant by 'Beating the Bounds?' Or is it one of the many ancient sayings whose meaning has not arrived? Also please tell me the meaning of the contraction A. U. C." Beating the Bounds was the name given a custom formerly in vogue in England. On Holy Thursday, or Ascension Day it used to be customary for the parish school children, in company with the clergyman and parish officers, to walk the parish from end to end, armed with long willow wands, with which they struck the boundary lines. This custom, before maps came into common use, taught them the boundaries of their respective parishes. It is yet observed in many parishes. The contraction given stands for the Latin phrase, *Anno Urbe Condita*, meaning "from the foundation of the city." The Roman reckoning of time dated from this period.

John (Sacramento, Cal.,) writes: "I am desirous of knowing the doctrines of the Fourierists. Will you please give me a brief synopsis of their ideas?" Fourierism is a communistic system, under which all the world was to be formed into groups, each consisting of 400 families or 1,800 individuals. These were to live together in a common edifice, which was to be furnished with workshops, studios, places of amusement, &c. Several of these groups were to be associated into a unitary government, like those of the Swiss Cantons, or of the United States. There was to be only one language used. All gains were to go into a common purse. Talent and industry were to be rewarded, but none were to be allowed to become indigent, or to be without certain luxuries and amusements. These are the chief features of the proposed plan of Charles Fourier, which, at present, shows no strong probability of becoming the way of the world.

Rhown (Sandusky, O.,) writes: "I have met recently in reading two words or names, of which I am anxious to know the full meaning. The words in question are Lilith and Lamia. They look like, and appear to be used as proper names, and seem to be employed in very much the same way. Now if it would not be too much trouble to you I would esteem it a favor if you could let me know the full signification of these words, and if they are proper names tell me their history. By so doing you will greatly oblige." Lilith or Lilis is a character in Jewish mythology, occurring in the Rabbinical traditions. The Talmudists say that Adam had a wife before Eve, called Lilis. Her behavior certainly gives the merit of antiquity to the Woman's Rights creed, for she refused to submit to the authority of Adam, and finally left him for the regions of the air. She is fabled to still haunt the night in a spectral form, and to be especially hostile to new-born infants. The word Lullaby is said to be a corruption of Lilia Abi or Lilia Avauni. Lamia is the name of a fabled phantom, used by the Greeks and Romans as a bugbear to children. She was a Lybian queen beloved by Jupiter, but robbed of her children by the jealous Juno. In consequence she vowed vengeance against children, and was supposed to entice them away and murder them. It was said that she could take out her eyes at pleasure. There were certain African spectres of somewhat similar name, being called Lamiæ. They had the head of a woman with the tail of a serpent, and were said to attract strangers by a hissing noise, and afterward to devour them. This story has been used in modern literature, as in Goethe's "Bride of Corinth."

J. S., (Oakfield, Wis.,) writes: "Seeing your kind answers to correspondents from week to week, I have ventured to ask a question or two, hoping you may exercise some of your best patience, and be kind enough to answer my question. Well, to come to the point: I am desperately in love with a beautiful girl, and am persuaded she returns my affection; but when I go to tell her of my love, I cannot speak a word. Now do you think I had better master my bashfulness and launch on the sea of matrimony, if she accepts me, or live single a few years more? My age is 21 years. Also, was Thomas Paine an infidel or a Spiritualist? Also, how are we to reconcile the contradictions that occur in the Bible, where Jesus speaks to the sisters of Lazarus, and tells them that Lazarus is not dead but sleepeth, and in the same chapter says Lazarus is dead? I have asked a good many ministers, but they do not explain satisfactorily to me. Please answer as early as possible, and confer a favor." Your trouble is by no means peculiar. Probably the majority of lovers experience something similar. But there are sufficient marriages to convince us that the most of them get over it, and to give us hope that you will be equally fortunate. As the present is Leap Year, perhaps the lady may solve the difficulty by herself proposing. There was no occasion to tell us your age. We could easily have guessed it. If you cannot overcome your bashfulness now, wait a few years and you will outgrow it. Or if you must pop the question at once, do it by letter if your tongue refuses its assistance. Thomas Paine was an unbeliever in the infallible inspiration of the Bible, &c. He died half a century before the origin of Spiritualism. As for your last question, it is out of our province. We do not, for obvious reasons, answer religious questions of that kind in this column.

J. F., (Poplar Bluff, Ark.,) writes: "I have one or two questions to ask you which I hope will put you to no trouble. What is the population of the world? How many languages are spoken in the world? How many different denominations of faith are professed? What is the average of human life? What is the population of New York and Philadelphia?" The population of the world is about 1,400,000,000. The number of languages and creeds is almost innumerable. The former are combined into several families, as the Aryan, Semetic, the Turanian, the Chinese, the American, and others, each of which embraces numerous languages and dialects. Religions are comprised under the several heads of Christian, Jewish, Mohammedan, Brahman, Boodhist, Parsee, and Pagan denominations, under each of which are various sects. The average duration of human life is at present about 33 years. It has been rising for several centuries past. According to the last census, the population of New York is 926,861, that of Philadelphia is 674,022.

Gold Fever (Schoharie, N. Y.,) writes: "Having been a reader of your valuable paper for about three years, will you please answer the following questions in your answers in correspondent's column:—Is there an instrument called a mineral rod? If so, will it indicate the locality of gold, silver, or other metals, always and without fail? What is the juice and where is it to be found?" There is what is called the divining rod, which is simply a hazel twig cut in the form of the letter Y. It is used by men called dowsers, who pretend to discover springs of water or mineral veins by its use. It is held in a peculiar way, and the fancy is that it will turn in their hands on approaching a vein of water or of metal. We would not advise you to put implicit faith in any such doubtful beliefs. You will probably find the excavator or pick your best divining rod in searching for gold.

Pickwick (Newark, O.,) writes: "Please answer the following questions in your correspondent's column:—Is it proper for a gentleman to call on a lady without an invitation? Should a gentleman prefix Mr. to his name when writing an invitation to a lady? Please give a few forms of asking a lady to dance with you. Is there a law in Ohio against carrying firearms? How did the custom of coloring eggs on Easter arise? Did you ever publish ——? If so, will you be kind enough to reprint it?" It depends entirely on the degree of acquaintance whether the gentleman should await an invitation or not. He may or may not prefix Mr. to his name. Forms vary with circumstances. Speak politely and reasonably, and you will need no special of form invitation. There is no law in any state, to our knowledge, against carrying firearms; it would be unconstitutional. The only laws of this kind are against carrying *concealed* weapons; and the constitutionality of such laws is doubtful. The use of Easter or Paach eggs is of great antiquity, and is not confined to the Christian nations. The Jews used them at the Passover; and the Persians gave colored eggs to one another at the commencement of the solar new year. It was probably in its origin a symbolization of the revivification of Nature in the Spring. To the Christians it is emblematic of the resurrection and the future life. In reply to your last question—we never published the work mentioned.

No Name (Laurel Hill, Va.,) writes: "Being a constant reader of your paper, I have always noticed your excellent advice to those who are in trouble, as in my present case; and so have come to you for relief. I have been engaged to a young man for two years. Now, in the spring, he has asked me to marry him. But I feel as if I do not like or care anything about him. During the past summer, when away from home for two weeks, I received letters from a young gentleman friend, whom I knew many years ago, and who used to be quite gay, but I have since learned has become very sober. I like him very much; rather more than the one to whom I am engaged. Now what shall I do or say to the one to whom I am engaged? Please advise one who is in trouble." If you do not love him, and feel sure you cannot love him, tell him so, and so end it. Marry no one whom you cannot love, even if you have to break an engagement. But do nothing rashly. In regard to the second, you like him only *rather* better than the first. You love neither of them then—and until your liking becomes more decided for one or the other, you had better say no to the pair.

Violet (Poplar Bluff, Ark.) writes: "Having once or twice seen in your valuable columns a receipt for making skeleton leaves, I want you to please tell me for what they are used. I also want to know which is the prettiest and most interesting city in the world." They are used for ornamental purposes, being made up into bouquets and other forms, and preserved under glass coverings. Travellers generally concede that Paris is the handsomest of modern cities. As to which is the most interesting, this, far more than the question of beauty, depends on people's tastes. To the devotee of fashion Paris would, no doubt, bear off the palm in this respect. But there are many other things in which men are interested, and every city is probably of greatest interest to some persons.

Obesity No. 2 (Allegheny, Pa.) writes: "In your paper of Dec. 30th you say, in answer to the question of Obesity, 'Mr. Banting's experience was that all articles of food containing starchy or saccharine ingredients were flesh formers, &c.' Will you please, if in your power, go a step further in answer to this, and say if his (Mr. Banting's) experience has been published? And, if so, where it can be procured?" It was published, under the title of a "Letter on Corpulence," in London in 1864, and republished in this country. We presume it is still in print and that any bookseller can procure it for you.

J. S. H. (Lake, Miss.) writes: "You will confer a favor by answering a few questions. When, by whom, and at what place were Sabbath Schools first started? and why? What name is the M. for in the name of John M. Clayton, Senator from Delaware in 1857-8? Is the American Almanac still published? If so, where can I obtain one? If not, is there anything that takes its place? If so, where can it be obtained?" The first Sabbath School was instituted in 1781, by Mr. R. Raikes, a printer of Gloucester, England. His object was the moral improvement of the ragged and ignorant children that filled the streets on Sunday. The name desired is John Middleton Clayton. The American Almanac is no longer published, and we know of none like it. The British Almanac resembles it in plan, but it gives English instead of American information.

Maud, (Philadelphia) writes: "Your valuable paper has long been a member of my family, and has often been the means of passing away the hours pleasantly, and as I see you are always ready to answer the different questions of your correspondents, I would like you to answer one or two questions. 1. If the air in our bodies is lighter than the air around us, why do we not ascend? 2. Why do tombs fall in such quantities after some warm summer showers?" The air in our bodies is but slightly lighter than the air around us, simply to the small extent to which it is expanded by the greater heat within the body. To lift up a substance as heavy as the human body it would need to be greatly increased in quantity, causing the body to the dimensions of a balloon, and to be expanded by a greater degree of heat. Nothing can ascend that is not lighter than the same volume of the atmosphere. The first balloons sent up were raised by heated air. Tombs do not generally fall after summer showers. They are merely driven from their holes in the ground by the intruding rain, or else step out of doors to enjoy the fresh air after the shower.

Susan, (Pennsylvania) writes: "I reckon my trouble you, but I want your advice on a matter that is worrying me exceedingly. I am secretly engaged to a gentleman to whom I am very much attached. I respect and honor him, while his feeling for me is the deepest devotion, and his intentions honorable. His fault is, his excess in drinking, but he is earnestly trying to cure himself. Still my father, on account of the gentleman's intemperance, has positively forbidden any intercourse between us, though before the gentleman revealed the state of his feeling for me, he was a constant and welcome guest at my father's house. I first became acquainted with him four years ago, when I was fifteen years old, and my regard for him has been growing warmer ever since. Though the engagement has only existed seven weeks, he wishes to marry me soon, but promises to wait patiently for even years, if I will only not break the engagement with him. What is my duty? Obey my father, and cast away all prospects of future happiness, or go on still giving encouragement to one whom I love, with the faint hope of some day realizing his wishes?" We think you have done wrong in entering into a secret engagement. You should have laid the proposal before your father, who is wiser than you are, and has your happiness doubtless greatly at heart. To marry an intemperate man is simply madness. Let your lover prove his devotion by abandoning his intemperate habits. If he will not or cannot do so to gain you, what is his love worth? If he will do this, and by three or four years of sobriety prove the love and his resolution, doubtless your father will frown no longer upon his suit. As you are only nineteen, you have plenty of time before you.

Classic (Utica, N. Y.,) writes: "Will you, through the medium of your interesting paper, give me some information as to the present state of things in Greece, and whether any trace of its ancient civilization remains? Or are the people wholly degenerate?" The principal remaining traces of Grecian civilization consist in the ruins of its grand architectural works. Most of the works of art capable of being moved have gone to countries more enlightened than Modern Greece can claim to be. As evidence of the decay of civilization in this remarkable land, a cart cannot now pass along the road from Tyloe to Sparta, where a carriage could pass in the days of Homer; and a mule travels with difficulty over rocks through which Pyrrhus led a train of elephants. Mountains once covered with forests are now bare rock, and streams immortalized in song present now dry beds.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

CONUNDRUMS.

☞ Teeth have they, yet chew not—comics.

☞ Lips have they, yet kiss not—pitchers.

☞ Why is a man's life safest before he has had his dinner? Because he can't digest then.

☞ Why is a riddle guessed by a father impossible to be guessed by any other member of the family? Because it is pa's finding out.

☞ What is the worst seat a man can sit on? Self-conceit.

☞ When is a small baby like a big banker? When he is a wroth-child, Rothschild.

☞ The reason that policemen are given to sleep on their posts may be found in their legal right to ar-rest.

☞ When does a man sit down to a melancholy dessert? When he sits down to (whine) wine.

☞ If your uncle's sister is not your aunt, what relation is she to you? She is your mother.

☞ What is most like a hen stealing? Why, a cock-robin, to be sure.

☞ Who always sits with his hat on before the President? His coachman.

☞ Why are your eyes like friends separated by distant climes? They correspond, but never meet.

☞ Why is a cat going up three pairs of stairs like a high hill? Because she's a mountain.

☞ Why is a horse like the letter O? Because gee (G) makes it go.

☞ Why may we look for an immediate change of weather? Because what we have now is snow weather (no weather.)

RECEIPTS.

Minced Mutton.—This is a very useful preparation of "cold mutton," and will be found an excellent mode. Cut slices of a cold roasted leg of mutton and mince it very fine; brown some flour in butter, and moisten it with some gravy; add salt and pepper to taste, and let it simmer about ten or fifteen minutes to take off the raw taste of the flour; add another lot of butter, and some parsley chopped fine, then add the minced meat, and let it simmer slowly, but not boil, or the meat will be hard.

Rarey Loaf.—1 quart flour, 4 eggs, ½ cup melted butter, 1 cup warm milk, 1 cup warm water, 4 tablespoonfuls yeast, 1 teaspoonful salt, ½ teaspoonful soda dissolved in water. Beat the eggs to a stiff froth, add the milk, water, butter, soda, and salt; stir in the flour to a smooth batter, and beat the yeast in well. Set to rise in a buttered pudding-dish, in which it must be baked and sent to table. Or if you wish to turn it out, set to rise in a well-buttered mould. It will not be light under six hours. Bake steadily three-quarters of an hour, or until a straw thrust into it comes up clean. Eat while hot.

Cocoanut Cake.—Grate on a coarse grater one cocoanut. Boil one quart of molasses until it begins to thicken and approach the candy state. Then put in the grated nut, and stir it well a few minutes. Take it off the fire, and with a spoon on paper make it up into little balls as we see. When cold they will adhere.

Groundnut Cake.—Roast and shell one pint of groundnuts. Take one pound of good brown sugar, melt it in two quarts of water; let it boil hard, long enough to approach the candy or taffy state, throw in the groundnuts, stir it well, and take it off the fire. Now, with a spoon spread it in cakes, thinly, on white paper to dry. When cold they are hard.